

AN
ADDRESS to the DEISTS;
OR,
AN INQUIRY
INTO THE
CHARACTER of the AUTHOR
OF THE
BOOK of REVELATION.

[PRICE TWO SHILLINGS AND SIXPENCE.]

ADDRESSES TO THE DEISTS;

IN A LETTER

CHARACTER OF THE AUTHOR

OF THE
BOOK OF REVELATION

[WITH TWO SUPPLEMENTS AND AN APPENDIX]

AN
 ADDRESS to the DEISTS:
 OR,
 AN INQUIRY
 INTO THE
 CHARACTER of the AUTHOR
 OF THE
 Book of REVELATION.
 WITH AN
 APPENDIX,

In which the Argument of Mr. HUME against the
 Credibility of Miracles is considered and refuted.

By one who thinks with that eminent Judge,
 Sir MATTHEW HALE,
That Religion is the first Concern of Man.

The SECOND EDITION with ADDITIONS.

L O N D O N.
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ADDRESSES TO THE DEISTS:

A. A. L. NO. 1. R. Y.

THE AUTHOR

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P R E F A C E.

IN writing and publishing the following little work the author had neither fame nor profit in view. His motive for it arose from a willingness he found in himself to lend a helping hand, feeble as it may be, in promoting the cause of Christianity; and from being frequently hurt in conversation by the indifference with which the book of Revelation has been treated even by sincere Christians. Many of the worthy part of the clergy themselves seem to shrink from the subject. Now, he is convinced this never happens when any pains have been taken to be properly acquainted with it. No man, who had not pre-conceived some prejudice against that book, ever applied himself to the study of it without becoming, he ventures to say, even fond of it.

Another

Another motive with the author for this undertaking was a desire to befriend the Deists; many of whom, notwithstanding their incredulity, he values and regards. The intention he hopes they will take in good part; though he should fail in the execution. In truth, their scheme of religion appears to him to stand on a very weak foundation, and to be full of danger in its *final* consequence. To set before them this weakness and this danger, which they seem strangely to disregard, is therefore one great object of this publication.

A N
I N Q U I R Y
I N T O T H E
C H A R A C T E R o f t h e A U T H O R
O F T H E
B O O K o f R E V E L A T I O N.

P A R T I.

THE Book of Revelation is generally supposed to have been written by St. John the Evangelist, about the year of Christ 95,* and twenty-four years after the destruction of Jerusalem. The design of it is expressed in the four following verses.

Chap. I. Ver. 1. "The revelation of Jesus Christ, which God gave him to shew unto his servants things which must † shortly come to pass."

Ver. 19. "Write the things which thou hast seen, and the things which are, and the things which shall be hereafter."

B

Chap.

* See Bishop Halifax on the Prophecies.

† See notes at the end, No. I.

Chap. IV. Ver. 1. "After this I looked,
 "and behold a door was opened in heaven,
 "and the first voice I heard was as it were
 "of a trumpet talking with me, which said,
 "come up hither, and I will shew thee the
 "things which must be hereafter."

Chap. X. Ver. 11. "And he said unto me
 "thou must prophecy again before many peo-
 "ples, and nations, and tongues, and kings."

So that it is evident beyond all contradic-
 tion, that the author, whoever he was, or at
 whatever time he wrote the book, undertook
 to predict future events. This the most ca-
 viling sceptic dares not deny. But he flatly
 denies, that inspiration has any hand in it:
 for he is quite positive and perfectly convin-
 ced that the whole is a piece of guess-work,
 framed by the hand of some visionary enthu-
 siast or designing impostor, in order to impose
 on the easy credulity of mankind, for the
 purposes of I leave the Deist*
 himself to assign the motive; which whether
 it be sufficient to satisfy his own mind is what
 I will not pretend to say: but this I will say,
 that

* As I shall have frequent occasion, in the course of
 this work, to make mention of the fashionable sect of
 deists, it may not be amiss to set before the reader what I
 take to be their best principles. See Note II.

that the undertaking was a pretty bold, if not an unaccountable one for either one or the other. And this of itself (without taking into the account the opinion of many very eminent men, among whom I might mention our own great countryman, Sir Isaac Newton, that he has succeeded in his undertaking) would be sufficient, I should think, to merit at least the *attention* of the Deist. The following question therefore is well worth the discussion, and his most serious consideration, *viz.* Whether the book of Revelation is (what it claims to be) the work of divine inspiration; or (what the Deist would have it to be) the offspring of enthusiasm or imposture?

Now common sense tells us, that where we cannot arrive at certainty, we ought, if we mean to act as reasonable creatures, to be content with probability. And indeed human actions in every part of common life, where common sense prevails, are invariably influenced this way, I should therefore hope, that if in the following observations it should be made appear the Deist has espoused the most improbable side of the question, he will have the honesty and the resolution to quit it, and come over to the other; even though the consequence should be his belief of Christianity.

nity. Now the first thing that strikes me in considering the contents of this extraordinary book (on the supposition of its being the work of an enthusiast or an impostor) is, what could have been the motive to have induced either one or the other to take the pains to compose it. The incredulous, or rather credulous, Deist, will perhaps tell me, that with respect to the impostor, his motive was the hope of having the honour of being reckoned a prophet some hundred of years after his death. And with respect to the enthusiast he may say, that being animated and encouraged by the imagined success of the ancient prophets, his mind at the same time heated by a rapturous fit of devotion, took it into his head that he was also a prophet, and sat himself down and composed the whole work before the fit grew cold. If you are not satisfied with either of these reasons, I know of no better he can give you unless it be this, that inspiration is a miracle; and that the Great Disposer of all events never has had, nor ever will have, occasion to perform one. But notwithstanding this peremptory assertion of the Deist, I am vain enough to consider this argument as a presumptive proof of the divine inspiration of this book. Another of
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the same kind I shall take the liberty to draw from the esteem the book was held in by those who lived nearest the time of its first publication.* A famous pagan philosopher, Justin Martyr, who was converted to Christianity not above forty years after this book was written, did not take the author of it to have been either an enthusiast or an impostor. And I should hope, it will not be thought great presumption in me to suppose he was at least as good a judge of the matter as Voltaire or Hume.

If Christianity itself is also an imposture, is it a matter so very easily accounted for, how an acute philosopher should have been converted, notwithstanding the prejudices of his education, and the disgrace and infamy which attended every convert to Christianity in that early period of its existence? In short, a single instance of this kind appears to me (on the supposition of Christianity's being an imposture) almost a prodigy: and a candid Deist would, I believe, honestly confess that it is indeed no easy matter fairly to account for it. I know indeed what the staunch and thorough-bred Deist might say—‘I do not wonder at it at all. Man is such a capricious

* See Note III.

' cious, such an excentric being, I will not
 ' take it upon me to account for any thing he
 ' does or any thing he believes. In short, I
 ' pay no regard to your presumptive proofs
 ' and probabilities, had you a hundred of
 ' them. Certainty is what I demand; and if
 ' you cannot give it me—nay, if the nature
 ' of the case will not admit of it, it is the
 ' same thing to me. I stand firm. I pay no
 ' regard to the present state of the Jews,*
 ' which you are for ever dinging my ears
 ' with What an amazing thing it
 ' is! why, it is a standing miracle! I say I
 ' do not wonder at this neither. Nay, con-
 ' sidering the singular nature of their polity,
 ' I should rather wonder if it was not so.
 ' This undoubtedly is the true cause of their
 ' having continued so many ages distinct from
 ' those among whom they have been dispersed.
 ' And I am persuaded, that if the matter was
 ' nicely scrutinised, it would be found to be
 ' also the cause of that peculiarity of feature
 ' which I own so remarkably distinguishes a
 ' Jew from all other men. You see I take
 ' no notice of their obstinate, bigotted dis-
 ' position, which some eminent authors I
 ' could mention think quite sufficient to
 ' solve

* See Note IV.

‘ solve the whole difficulty. I must confess,
 ‘ indeed, that it is somewhat singular this
 ‘ should have been foretold in a certain book
 ‘ of their own many ages before their disper-
 ‘ sion. This I confess is odd enough. But
 ‘ still it is *possible* there may be some mistake
 ‘ some where or other. The expressions may
 ‘ perhaps refer to something else, &c.’ But
 to return, and to come closer to the point, I
 shall set down the following

PROPOSITION.

AS the author of the book of Revelation
 actually assumed the character of one inspired,
 and undertook to predict a great variety of fu-
 ture events, he either was one who was really
 inspired; i. e. a prophet, or one who pre-
 tended to be so, though he was conscious he
 was not, i. e. an imposter, or one who also
 pretended to be so and thought he was, tho’
 in fact he was not; i. e. an enthusiast. There
 is no other character to whom the writing of
 it can, I think, be ascribed. And if it can
 be made appear to be improbable, that either
 of the two last could have been the author,
 the

the writing of it must, in all fair reasoning, be attributed to the first.

With respect to the improbability of an impostor's, or an enthusiast's being the author, I think I might venture to rest it on what has already been observed on that head, viz. The want of a sufficient motive for the undertaking, and the esteem the book was held in by those who lived nearest the time of it's first publication. I shall, however, as an enforcement of this argument, transcribe some passages from the book itself, in order to shew the farther improbability of it's having been written by either of these two characters. To this I shall add a more decisive argument, by shewing the correspondence of some predictions in this book with events recorded in history, particularly that of the locusts, with the ravages, customs, and manners of the Saracens; and that of the four angels loosed from the river Euphrates, with the conquests of the Turks; and lastly, that of the beast with seven heads and ten horns, with popery. Flattering myself, that from the result of these four considerations, there will appear to the Deist such a degree of improbability of the author of the book of Revelation being either an enthusiast or an impostor, as may induce him

him to suspect at least, that he really was what he claimed to be. And it would give me great pleasure if he would advance one step farther, by acknowledging, (what however must be an undisputed truth) that if he was what he claimed to be, Christianity must be true.

And now I cannot help observing, that if it be probable Christianity is true, and this from an argument drawn from the book of Revelation only, how much must this probability be increased by adding to it that great variety of other proofs* which might easily be drawn from other quarters. Not to mention that great comprehensive argument arising from a general view, first, of the majesty, sublimity, and at the same time, simplicity of the Scriptures, † and the perfection of the moral precepts contained in them. Secondly, of the many particular interpositions‡ of Providence therein recorded. And, lastly, of that consistency and connection throughout the whole. In short, such an accumulation

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* See Note V.

† See Note VI.

‡ Every one of which must be false if Deism be true. See the Deist's 4th tenet, Note II.

of evidence arises from the aggregate, as bids defiance to every supposition of chance or of imposture, and such a powerful weight of argument is produced, that I cannot sufficiently wonder where and what that mighty one is which is to over-balance it. I sometimes fancy the Deist, from his seeming so easy and indifferent about the matter, must have some argument in store; some choice and curious specific, (if I may so call it) which he occasionally takes as qualms arise; but which, as the miser his hoarded bags, he selfishly keeps to himself. For otherwise, it appears to me not a little unaccountable how he can bring himself to withstand all this evidence. Perhaps he pays himself the compliment to think, that although Christianity should be true, he runs no risque of suffering on account of his disbelief of it, because there are difficulties attending it which are not cleared up to his satisfaction. Not considering that those difficulties may be of his own making, or at least, made greater through prejudice than they really are. But this in particular he does not seem sufficiently to consider, that though there should be some real difficulties in

in some part,* this cannot invalidate the proofs from other quarters; nor can it ever weaken the evidence which arises from the result of the whole, in which those difficulties will be allowed all the weight they can fairly claim. Besides, who can say what alteration the removal of all difficulties might occasion in a probationary state? Nor indeed, whether this were possible without the perpetual interposition of Providence, not only to prevent the natural effect of that great source of false judgment, prejudice, which springs in the human breast from a great variety of causes; and principally in the article of religion from those of pride,† and the indulgence of some passion forbade by the Gospel; but also to prevent all designed corruptions in the Scriptures and pious frauds—nay, every mistake that may be committed by every careless or ignorant transcriber. And this *in all places and at all times*; even as long as man shall continue on this stage of his existence. But if the Christian religion be true,* the evidence for the truth of it cannot but be as

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great

* See Note VII.

† See a masterly sermon on this subject by Bishop Hurd.

* See Note VIII.

great as it ought to be; * and they who will not be satisfied with it must abide the consequence. But that any man can think himself *perfectly* secure in rejecting it, on the dangerous though specious plea of its not being sufficient for him, proves, far beyond all other instances, that the heart of man is fatally capable of deceiving itself, even in its eternal concerns. But, (alarming words for the unbeliever) “ If the Gospel be hid, it is hid to them that are lost.” (Cor. II. ch. 4. ver. 3.)

Having endeavoured to shew the improbability of an impostor or an enthusiast being the author of the book of Revelation, from the consideration of the want of a sufficient motive for the undertaking, and of the esteem the book was held in by those who lived nearest the time of its first publication, I now proceed to shew the further improbability of it by considering many passages taken from the book itself; which are in such a strain and of such a nature as cannot easily, I think, be supposed to have been written by either of those two characters.

* See Note IX.

CHAPTER I.

Ver. 1. " The Revelation of Jesus Christ
 " which God gave him, to shew unto his
 " servants things which must shortly come
 " to pass. And he sent and signified it by
 " his angel to his servant John."

Ver. 2. " Who bare record of the word
 " of God, and of the testimony of Jesus
 " Christ, in relation to whatever he saw."*

Ver. 3. " Blessed is he that readeth and
 " they that hear the words of this prophecy,
 " and observe the things that are written
 " therein for the time is at hand."

There is a plainness and simplicity in this introduction very different from the style and manner of an enthusiast. And if the author was an impostor, he was certainly not only the most audacious but the strangest and most unaccountable one that ever attempted to impose
 on

* Even that John who was a witness of the Gospel of God and of Christ, in relation to things which he himself saw, transacted and knew, and who was therefore one of the twelve apostles, and the beloved disciple of Christ. (Daubuz.)

on the world, for it is not easy to guess the smallest possible motive for it.

CHAPTER II.

Ver. 2. " I know thy works and thy labour and thy patience, and know thou can'st not bear them which are evil; and thou hast tried them which say they are apostles and are not; and hast found them lyars."

Ver. 4. " Nevertheless I have somewhat against thee, because thou hast left thy first love."

Ver. 5. " Remember therefore from whence thou art fallen and repent, and do thy first works; or else I will come unto thee quickly, and remove thy candlestick out of its place, except thou repent."

CHAPTER III.

Ver. 2. " Be watchful and strengthen the things which remain, that are ready to die, for I have not found thy works perfect before God."

Ver. 5.

Ver. 5. " He that overcometh, the same
" shall be clothed in white raiment: and I
" will not blot out his name out of the book
" of life, but I will confess his name before
" my father and before his angels."

Ver. 8. " I know thy works, behold I
" have set before thee an open door and no
" man can shut it: for thou hast a little
" strength, and hast kept my word, and hast
" not denied my name."

Ver. 17. " Because thou sayest I am rich
" and increased with goods; and have need of
" nothing; and knowest not that thou art
" wretched, and miserable, and poor, and
" blind, and naked."

Ver. 19. " As many as I love I rebuke
" and chasten. Be zealous therefore and re-
" pent."

This is not the language of an enthusiastic
visionary. And the sentiments contain such a
happy mixture of tenderness and reproof, as
is perfectly in character with the great and be-
nificent Being who is the speaker, and which
seems far beyond the reach of the most artful
impostor.

CHAPTER IV.

Ver. 8. " And the four beasts had each
 " of them six wings about him, and they
 " were full of eyes within. And they rest
 " not day and night, saying, Holy, holy, holy,
 " Lord God Almighty ; which was and is
 " and is to come."

Ver. 9. " And when these beasts give
 " glory, and honour, and thanks, to him that
 " sat on the throne, who liveth for ever,"

Ver. 10. " The four and twenty elders
 " fell down before him that sat on the throne,
 " and worship him that liveth for ever and
 " ever, and cast their crowns before the throne,
 " saying,

Ver. 11. " Thou art worthy, O Lord, to
 " receive glory, and honour, and power ;
 " for thou hast created all things, and for
 " thy pleasure they are and were created."

These expressions are in a strain of rational
 and sublime devotion ; not the wild incohe-
 rent rant of an enthusiast.

Though each verse of the following chap-
 ter may not be strictly pertinent to my present
 argument, yet as there appears to me something
 very

very striking and noble in the whole strain of it, I cannot forbear transcribing it entire.— And though it was far from my design when I first thought of doing it, yet I hope the reader will not think I wander too far from the immediate subject in hand, if I make a few remarks, by way of explanation, on the particular parts of it as I go along. In this, as well as in the following part of this work, I shall take the liberty of borrowing freely from the commentators; at least as far as I may have occasion; particularly from Bishop Newton, one of the latest as well as one of the best.

CHAPTER XIV.

Ver. 1. “And I looked, and lo! a Lamb
“ stood on the Mount Sion, and with him a
“ hundred and forty-four thousand, having
“ their father’s name written in their fore-
“ heads.”

Ver. 2. “And I heard a voice from hea-
“ ven, as the voice of many waters, and as
“ the voice of a great thunder; and I heard
“ the voice of harpers, harping with their
“ harps.”

D

Ver. 3.

Ver. 3. " And they sung as it were a new
 " song before the throne, and before the
 " four beasts and the elders ; and no man
 " could learn that song, but the hundred
 " and forty-four thousand which were re-
 " deemed from the earth."

Ver. 4. " These are they which are not
 " defiled with women, for they are virgins :
 " these are they which follow the Lamb whi-
 " thersoever he goeth : these were redeemed
 " from among men, being the first fruits
 " unto God and the Lamb."

Ver. 5. " And in their mouth was found
 " no guile, for they are without fault before
 " the throne of God."

The contents of these five verses seem to be a counterpart of the seventh chapter. For as in that, the great event of the establishment of Christianity by Constantine, and the happy deliverance and triumphant state of those who had suffered in its cause by the tyranny of the Pagan Roman beast, seem to have been alluded to—So, the great event of the reformation, and the happy deliverance and triumphant state of those who had suffered for adhering to the purity of the Christian faith, by the tyranny of the papal Roman beast, seem to be alluded to in this.

Ver.

Ver. 6. "And I saw another angel fly in
" the midst of heaven, having the everlasting
" gospel to preach unto them that dwell on
" the earth, and to every nation, and kin-
" dred, and tongue, and people."

Ver. 7. "Saying with a loud voice, Fear
" God and give glory to him, for the hour
" of his judgement is come: and worship
" him that made heaven and earth, and the
" sea, and the fountains of water."

The falling off of a great part of Europe from the Pope, at the time of the reformation, may fairly be called a judgement on him—for that this judgement is to be applied to him appears pretty plain from the next verse.

Ver. 8. "And there followed another angel saying, Babylon is fallen, is fallen, that
" great city; because she made all nations
" drink of the wine of the wrath of her for-
" nication."

These last verses seem to refer to that great event of the reformation, and the declension of popery. The utter extinction of it is reserved to a more distant period, and described at large, and in strong terms, in the 18th chapter.

Ver. 9. "And the third angel followed
 " them, saying with a loud voice, if any man
 " worship the beast and his image, and re-
 " ceive his mark in his forehead or in his
 " hand,"

Ver. 10. "The same shall drink of the
 " wine of the wrath of God, which is pour-
 " ed out without mixture into the cup of his
 " indignation. And he shall be tormented
 " with fire and brimstone in presence of the
 " holy angels, and in the presence of the
 " Lamb."

Ver. 11. "And the smoke of their tor-
 " ments ascendeth up for ever and ever. And
 " they have no rest day nor night who wor-
 " ship the beast and his image, and whoso-
 " ever receiveth the mark of his name."

The highly figurative and strong expres-
 sions in these last three verses seem plainly to
 allude to the preaching of the first reformers;
 who with great earnestness and vehemence
 were continually setting forth to their audi-
 ence the dreadful and fatal errors of popery;
 and, indeed, denouncing damnation to all who
 adhered to them.

Ver. 12. "Here is the patience of the
 " saints; here are they that keep the com-
 " mandments

“ mandments of God and the faith of Jesus.”

This verse seems as plainly to allude to the great trials and persecutions of protestants by the Roman catholic powers in those times.*

Ver. 13. “ And I heard a voice from heaven saying unto me, Write, blessed are the dead which die in the Lord, from henceforth ; yea faith, the spirit, that they may rest from their labours ; and their works do follow them.”

There is something very remarkable in this last verse : “ Blessed are the dead who die in the Lord.” There seems to have been no need of a prophet to have told us this. And it is added, “from henceforth” —from this time. But was it not so before that time? Those that die in the Lord must surely have been blessed, die when they would. All this is so plain, that one cannot help thinking, that more is meant than meets the ear. Now it is well known, that the popish doctrine of purgatory was one of the chief articles which Luther and his followers attacked. And this horrible dogma denied immediate blessedness to those who died in the

* See the History of the Reformation.

the Lord. Even good men were to undergo, for a certain number of years, a purgatory of fire, before they were to be admitted into the state of the blessed. But Luther loudly proclaimed, that all who died in the Lord entered immediately into that state.

This, added to what was said in the preceding verses, exhibits a picture that bears a most striking resemblance to the times of the reformation. If it should be thought possible, it is surely very improbable, that an enthusiast or an impostor could have said so much that hangs so well together, and should have hit upon a particular trait (ver. 13.) which, though it might have been applicable to all times indiscriminately, applies, all circumstances considered, strictly and pertinently only to this.

Ver. 14. "And I looked, and behold a
" white cloud, and upon the cloud one sat
" like unto the Son of Man, having on his
" head a golden crown, and in his hand a
" sharp sickle."

Ver. 15. "And another angel came out of
" the temple, crying with a loud voice to him
" that sat on the cloud, Thrust in thy sickle
" and

“ and reap ; for the time is come for thee to
 “ reap, for the harvest of the earth is ripe.”

Ver. 16. “ And he that sat on the cloud
 “ thrust in his sickle on the earth, and the
 “ earth was reaped.”

Ver. 17. “ And another angel came out
 “ of the temple which is in heaven, he also
 “ having a sharp sickle.”

Ver. 18. “ And another angel came out of
 “ the altar which had power over fire, and
 “ cried with a loud cry to him that had the
 “ sharp sickle, saying, Thrust in thy sharp
 “ sickle and gather the clusters of the vine of
 “ the earth ; for her grapes are fully ripe.”

Ver. 19. “ And the angel thrust in his
 “ sickle into the earth, and gathered the vine
 “ of the earth, and cast it into the great
 “ wine-press of the wrath of God.”

Ver. 20. “ And the wine-press was trod-
 “ den without the city, and blood came out
 “ of the wine-press even unto the horses
 “ bridles, by the space of a thousand and six
 “ hundred furlongs.”

The warnings and threatenings of the three
 angels, or the first preachers of the reforma-
 tion, expressed in the 6th, 7th, 8th, 9th,
 10th, and 11th verses, not having had their
 due

due influence over the followers of the beast, the greater part of Christendom still adhering to popery, the judgments of God are in these last seven verses denounced against them; and represented under the figures of harvest and vintage. But whether the hyperbolical expressions in the last verse mean literally some dreadful slaughter in the neighbourhood of Rome; or, metaphorically, the utter extinction of popery, is not so easy to determine. But for the full explanation of this chapter I refer the reader to Bishop Newton.

CHAPTER XV.

Ver. 3. "And they sing the song of Moses, the servant of God, and the song of the Lamb, saying, Great and marvellous are thy works, Lord God Almighty; just and true are thy ways, thou King of Saints."

Ver. 4. "Who shall not fear thee and glorify thy name? for thou only art holy: for all nations shall come and worship before thee; for thy judgements are made manifest."

CHAPTER XIX.

Ver. 1. "And after these things I heard
"a great voice of much people in heaven,
"saying, Alleluja, salvation, and glory, and
"honour, and power, unto the Lord our
"God."

Ver. 2. "For true and righteous are his
"judgements; for he has judged the great
"whore, which did corrupt the earth with
"her fornication; and has avenged the blood
"of his servants at her hands."

Ver. 3. "And they said again, Alleluja!
"and her smoke rose up for ever and ever."

Ver. 4. "And the four and twenty elders
"and the four beasts fell down and wor-
"shipped God that sat on the throne, say-
"ing, Amen, Alleluja."

Ver. 5. "And a voice came out of the
"throne, saying, Praise our God, all ye his
"servants, and ye that fear him."

Ver. 6. "And I heard the voice of a great
"multitude, and as the voice of many wa-
"ters, and as the voice of mighty thunder-
"ings, saying, Alleluja, for the Lord God
"Omnipotent reigneth."

Ver. 7. "Let us be glad and rejoice and
"give honour to him, for the marriage of

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" the

“ the Lamb is come, and his wife has made
“ herself ready.”

Ver. 8. “ And to her was granted that she
“ should be arrayed in fine linen : for the fine
“ linen is the righteousness of saints.”

Ver. 9. “ And he said unto me, Write,
“ blessed are they which are called to the
“ marriage supper of the Lamb ; and he says
“ unto me, write, these are the true sayings
“ of God.”

Ver. 10. “ And I fell at his feet to wor-
“ ship him : and he said unto me, see thou
“ do it not. I am thy fellow-servant, and
“ of thy brethren that have the testimony of
“ Jesus. For the testimony of Jesus is the
“ spirit of prophecy.”

CHAPTER XXI.

Ver. 5. “ And he that sat upon the throne
“ said, behold, I make all things new. And
“ he said unto me, write, for these things
“ are true and faithful.”

Ver. 6. “ And he said unto me, it is done ;
“ I am Alpha and Omega, the Beginning
“ and the End. I will give unto him that
“ is a-thirst of the fountain of the water of
“ life freely.”

Ver.

Ver. 7. "He that overcometh shall inherit all things; and I will be his God, and he shall be my son."

Ver. 8. "But the fearful, and unbelieving, and the abominable, and murderers, and whoremongers, and forcerers, and all lyars shall have their portion in the lake which burneth with fire and brimstone; and is the second death."

Ver. 27. "And there shall in no wise enter into it any thing that defileth, neither whatsoever worketh abomination or maketh a lye."

I have now made, I think, a sufficient number of quotations to put the question to a fair trial. And I shall leave the deistical reader to determine, which of the two characters, the enthusiast or the impostor, he chuses to fix on for the author. But if he will give himself the trouble to consider them with attention and without prejudice, I shall not despair of his finally agreeing with me, that the language does not seem to be the language of either one or the other. And this is all I shall expect of him for the present.

END OF THE FIRST PART.

P A R T II.

HAVING in the preceding part endeavoured, by three considerations, to make it appear very improbable, that the book of Revelation was written either by an enthusiast or an impostor, I come now to a further and more decisive proof of it, by shewing the correspondence of a great variety of predictions in that book with events recorded in history, particularly those contained in the description of the fifth trumpet, with the Mahometan imposture, and the ravages, customs, and manners of the Saracens: those contained in the description of the sixth trumpet, with the destruction of the Eastern Roman Empire and Greek church by the Turks; and lastly, those relating to the beast with seven heads and ten horns, with popery. But it may not be amiss to observe, previously, that the Christian church having been greatly affected by those events

events, it is natural to suppose, that in a prophecy whose object was the fortunes which should attend it from the time of its rise to a very remote period, even to the consummation of all things, they would have been particularly marked. And indeed the effect of them was of such consequence respecting as well the purity as the progress of the Christian religion, that if one of them only had passed unnoticed, it might have furnished an argument against the divine inspiration of the book. That this, however, is not the case, is what I shall endeavour to make appear, although it may seem to be rendered unnecessary by so many eminent writers having already employed their pens on this task; and so little new can, for that reason, be now said upon it.

OF the FIFTH TRUMPET or FIRST WOE.

CHAPTER IX.

Ver. 1. "And the fifth angel sounded,
 "and I saw a star fall from heaven unto the
 "earth, and to him was given the key of the
 "bottomless pit."

Ver.

Ver. 2. " And he opened the bottomless
" pit, and there arose a smoke out of the pit
" as the smoke of a great furnace, and the
" sun and air was darkened by reason of the
" smoke of the pit."

Ver. 3. " And there came out of the
" smoke locusts upon the earth, and unto
" them was given power as the scorpions of
" the earth have power."

However emblematical or symbolical the expressions in the first two verses may be, it is, I think, very evident they are meant to convey the idea of a commission being given by God to some agent, some instrument, of his providence. Who this agent is, may, perhaps, not be hard to discover as we go on.

The second verse seems also very fitly to represent in symbolical language, the setting up a false religion, by filling the minds of men with darkness and error; for the just punishment, no doubt, of the apostacy* of the times. By the third verse, and, as will presently and more particularly be seen, by the fourth

* In this barbarous age (7th) religion lay expiring under a motley and enormous heap of superstitious inventions. The Christians of this century paid homage to the remains of the cross, to the images of saints, and to bones, &c. Mosheim's Ecclesiastical Hist. vol. 2. p. 21,

fourth, chastisement on those apostates seems to be intimated.

Ver. 4. " And it was commanded them
 " that they should not hurt the grass of the
 " earth, neither any green thing, neither any
 " tree, but only such men who have not the
 " seal of God in their foreheads."

Ver. 5. " And to them it was given that
 " they should not kill them, but that they
 " should be tormented five months; and
 " their torment was as the torment of a scorpion when he striketh a man."

Ver. 6. " And in those days shall men
 " seek death and shall not find it, and shall
 " desire to die, but Death shall flee from
 " them."

The fourth verse demonstrates that the locusts described are not natural but symbolical. And it is I think well worth remarking, that Abubicker, the immediate successor of Mahomet, gave the following order to Yezed his general, when he was marching an army into Syria. " Destroy no palm tree nor burn
 " any field of grass; cut down no fruit trees,
 " nor do any mischief to cattle but only such
 " as you kill to eat." The commission in the text to hurt and torment only such men who
 had

had not the seal of God in their foreheads could not have been given to a Pagan. He would hardly have persecuted idolaters for being what he was himself. And from every circumstance it appears, that it was not given to any Christian power. Mahomet therefore is the only person we can go to for the application. For Mahomet was not a Pagan; nay, his pretence for taking up of arms was to punish idolaters, and even Christians for their idolatry in worshipping saints, and even their images. If there should be thought a difficulty in its being said in the fifth verse, that they should not kill but only torment, it may be observed, that though they might kill, as no doubt they did many thousands of individuals, yet they should not kill them as a political body, as a state or empire. They might greatly harass and torment both the Greek and the Latin church, but should not extirpate (the proper sense of the word *kill* in this prophetic description) the one or the other. The taking of Constantinople and putting an end to the Greek empire was reserved for another power, as we shall see in the next trumpet.

In the sixth verse is set forth the miserable state of those times. And it is certain, that
the

the military laws of the Saracens adjudged so many persons to a most wretched captivity ; and the condition of the women in particular was so deplorable, by falling into the hands of wretches, who set no bounds to their lust, that though their lives were spared, many chose death itself in preference to the hard condition to which they were reduced.

It has been remarked by the commentators, that the expression of a third part, which was used in the four preceding trumpets, seems purposely to have been omitted in this ; because this judgment was not confined to Europe (" the third part of men") as the rest were.

Ver. 7. " And the shapes of the locusts
" were like unto horses prepared unto battle ;
" and on their heads were, as it were, crowns
" like gold, and their faces as the faces of
" men."

Ver. 8. " And they had hair as the
" hair of women, and their teeth were as the
" teeth of lions."

Ver. 9. " And they had breast plates as
" it were breast plates of iron, and the sound
" of their wings was as the sound of chariots
" of many horses running to battle."

F

Ver. 10.

Ver. 10. " And they had tails like unto
 " scorpions, and there were stings in their
 " tails, and their power was to hurt men
 " five months."

Ver. 11. " And they had a king over
 " them, which is the angel of the bottomless
 " pit, whose name in the Hebrew tongue is
 " Abaddon, but in the Greek tongue has his
 " name Apollyon."

The power and actions of the locusts in general having been set forth in the six first verses, there follows in the five next a description of their nature and qualities, by which they were capable of effecting such mischief as is attributed to them. The first article (ver. 7.) is their being " like horses prepared
 " unto battle." It has been observed by naturalists, that the head of a locust resembles that of a horse. And the great strength of the Saracens consisted in their cavalry, by which they were enabled to make such rapid and extensive conquests. " And on their heads
 " were as it were crowns like gold," which seems to be an allusion to the head dress of the Arabians, who have constantly worn mitres or turbants; of which indeed they made their boast, saying, that they wore for ornaments what were crowns and diadems with
 other

other people. The crowns on the heads of these locusts may be meant also to signify, that they of whom locusts are the type should possess what is prefigured by the symbol of crowns, viz. dominions. Mr. Mead on the place observes, “ that no nation had ever so
 “ wide a command ; nor were ever so many
 “ kingdoms, so many regions, subjugated in
 “ so short a space of time. It sounds incre-
 “ dible, yet most true it is, that in the space
 “ of eighty or not many more years, they
 “ subdued and acquired to the diabolical
 “ kingdom of Mahommed, Palestine, Syria,
 “ both Armenias, almost all Asia Minor, Per-
 “ sia, Arabia, India, Egypt, Numidia, all
 “ Barbary even to the river Niger, Portugal,
 “ and Spain ; neither did their fortune or
 “ their ambition stop, till they had added also
 “ a great part of Italy as far as the gates of
 “ Rome. Moreover Sicily, Candia, Cyprus,
 “ and other islands in the Mediterranean Sea.
 “ Good God ! how great a tract, how many
 “ crowns were here ! Whence also it is worthy
 “ of observation, that mention is not made
 “ here as in the other trumpets of the “ third
 “ part,” for as much as this plague fell no
 “ less without the bounds of the Roman em-
 F 2 “ pire,

“pire, than within it; and extended itself
“even to the remotest Indies.”

Another particular by which the locusts, or the instruments of the woe of this trumpet, are described is, “their faces were as the faces
“of men,” which may be an allusion to the custom of the Arabians, who though they wore long hair like women (as the text immediately adds) affected to wear large mustachios or whiskers like men. The next particular is, “that they had hair as the hair of
“women;” that is, long hair tressed, and plaited like women: by which is set forth their effeminacy and lust; to which (the last in particular) were extremely addicted. And it is therefore not to be wondered at, that the politic and libidinous impostor made the chief happiness of his paradise to consist in the gratification of this passion. Another particular is their “having teeth as the teeth of lyons,” which sets forth their rapaciousness and cruelty. The text says also, that they had
“breast plates as it were breast plates of iron.” And natural locusts have a hard shell or skin which has been called their armour. This figur may be meant to express the defensive, as the former (their teeth) was the offensive arms of the Saracens. The next particular is,
that

that "the sound of their wings were as the
 " sound of chariots of many horses running
 " to battle." Much the same comparison
 had been used by the Prophet Joel, "Like
 " the noise of chariots on the tops of moun-
 " tains shall they leap." Pliny takes notice
 of the great noise made by the wings of lo-
 cufts in their flight. Their wings, and the
 sound of their wings, denote the swiftness
 and rapidity of their conquests, and express
 the noise of their horses, and the great terror
 and consternation they would occasion where-
 ever they came. Another character of these
 locusts is, that "they had tails like scor-
 " pions, and stings in their tails." As it is
 certain natural locusts have no stings in their
 tails (strictly speaking they have no tails; for
 what is by some authors called their tail is
 only the extreme part of the abdomen, end-
 ing in a sharp point) we are naturally led to
 construe the text as meant to signify, that
 those who are prefigured by locusts should, in
 their invasions, cruelly oppress; and thus,
 though locusts, should torment as scorpions.
 The words in the text may also be designed to
 signify, that wherever they carried their arms
 they should instil the poison of error and de-
 lusion.

lusion.* The last particular of the locusts is, their having a king over them “ the angel of the bottomless pit, whose name in the Hebrew “ tongue is Abaddon, and in the Greek Apollyon.” Natural locusts have no king. And the king which these symbolical locusts are said to have over them, (king, angel, and star may be synonymous; for the two last are often symbols of the first) or angel of the bottomless pit, can be no other than the star which had the key of it; but as king in the language of prophecy is not always confined to one particular individual, but signifies a succession of kings; so here we are under no necessity of supposing this star to be meant particularly for Mahomet, who began the imposture; but for him jointly with all his successors who carried it on. The Hebrew name of Abaddon and the Greek name of Apollyon, both signify a destroyer; a word which makes the distinguishing character of this king of the locusts; and which perfectly well agrees with Mahomet and the Caliphs his successors; who were the authors of all those horrid wars and desolations—who openly taught and professed that their religion was to be propagated and established by the sword.

* “ And the prophet that teacheth lies, he is the tail.”
Isaiah, Chap. IX. Ver. 15.

I come now to the consideration of the period of five months assigned to these locusts in the 5th and 10th verses. It is to be observed, that the text is capable of three interpretations. The first, taking the five months for common ones, may signify, that those of whom locusts are the type, should commit ravages and depredations after the manner of locusts, during the five warmest summer months. For it is only in those months that these insects are found in any abundance, or are capable of doing mischief. Now it is well known that the usual practice of the Saracens was to invade their neighbours by sudden incursions during the summer months; retiring and dispersing themselves in the winter. In this manner they besieged Constantinople for seven years together in the reign of Constantine Pogonatus: coming before it in April and retiring from it in September. So that if this interpretation be right, it is scarcely possible for a prophecy to be more literally fulfilled.

Another interpretation is, that the five months are meant to mark the duration of this woe; “ And to them it was given, that they should not kill, but they should be tormented five months, &c.” (ver. 5.)

And

And it being mentioned a second time (ver. 15.) may be intended to fix our attention more particularly upon it; and perhaps, to prevent our taking it in the sense of the first interpretation *only*. But however this may be, I observe, that as it is plain from several parts of the text, that symbolical, and not natural locusts are meant, the time specified must be supposed to refer to what is prefigured by them. And as five or ten months, if taken for common ones, can hardly be thought of sufficient duration for the accomplishment of what is said in the description of the woe of this trumpet, we are necessarily led to conclude, that they are to be taken for prophetic months: that is, a day for a year, agreeable to the prophecies of Daniel; which our author seems to follow in this respect throughout the Revelation. A Jewish month being thirty days, five months will make one hundred and fifty years. Now though it may be difficult to fix precisely the beginning of these hundred and fifty years; whether at the year 612, when Mahomet began publicly to preach his imposture; or from the time he and his followers committed such ravages as properly to come under the description of locusts; most certain it is, that the Saracens
made

made their principal conquests, and committed the greatest ravages, especially on the Greek empire, during the first 150 years of their empire. For at the end of this period the Caliph Almanzer built the city of Bagdad, which he made the fixed seat of his empire, and called it the city of peace. He began to build it in the year 762, which was precisely 150 years from the time Mahomet began publickly to preach his religion. The Saracens then began to be settled; and only engaged after this in common and ordinary wars like other nations.

The last interpretation is, that five months being again mentioned in the tenth verse, some commentators have thought the five months should be doubled; and then the whole term of the plague of the locusts will be 300 years. And it is very certain, that it was about this space of time the Saracenic empire subsisted. Nay, if the beginning of it is fixed at the year on which the battle of Yermouk was fought, (where indeed some commentators have fixed the commencement of this woe) when the Christian emperor's army of two hundred and fifty thousand men was entirely defeated by thirty-six thousand Saracens, it was precisely so long. For this fatal battle

was fought in November 636, (24 years after Mahomet publicly assumed the character of an apostle of God) and in November 936, the Caliph Arradis Billa was stripped of all his temporal power, and had nothing left him but Bagdad, where he lived only as sovereign pontiff. So that, as Bishop Newton observes, let those five months be taken in any possible construction, the event will still answer, and the prophecy will still be fulfilled: though (as he adds) the second interpretation appears much more probable than the first or third.

PRELIMINARY OBSERVATIONS on the SIXTH TRUMPET.

For the better elucidation of the description of this trumpet, it may not be amiss to give, previously, a succinct account of what history records of the origin of the Turkish empire.

Pomponius Mela, who flourished about the middle of the first century, speaking of the Gelani, a Scythian people, has these words, "*Juxta Thyrsagetæ, Turcæque, vastas sylvas occupant alunturque venando, &c.*" and Pliny, describing the barbarous nations of these parts, joins the Tussagetæ (Thyrsagetæ) with

with the Turks ; and places them next to the Arympheians as Mela does “ usque ad Solitudines Saltuosas vallibus asperas.” They seem to have been known only by name till about the year 577, when the Avars, a neighbouring nation, compelled them to forsake their seats and pass into Europe. In this expedition they made themselves masters of Pannonia. In the time of Heraclius we find them with other barbarous nations at the siege of Constantinople, under the command of the Persians ; after which they set up for themselves. And about the year 763, returned to their former habitations in Asia, laden with spoils. In the year 844 they again quitted their own country, and once more broke through the Caspian Streights ; and passing through Iberia seized on Arminia Major, and there fixed themselves, giving it the name of Turcomania. In this spacious country they roamed up and down without any certain habitation ; removing their herds and their families from one place to another, as they formerly had been used to do in the fens of Mæotis. Thus they lived a poor and contemptible people till Mahomet, the Sultan of Persia, rebelling against his lord and master the Caliph of Babylon, called in the Turks to his aid ; by which

means he obtained a signal victory. The Turks then demanded their pay and dismissal; but Mahomet would neither pay nor dismiss them, but shut up the passages of the river Araxes which he had before opened for them: so that they had it not in their power, had they been so minded, to retire out of his dominions. Provoked by this usage, and having been joined by a great number of needy people, and many discontented soldiers of the Sultan Mahomet, they began to spoil and waste the country, under the conduct of their principal leader Tangrolipix. On this a large body of Persians is sent against them; which they not only defeated, but by the spoils they took supplied themselves with a sufficient quantity of arms, horses, &c. to enable them to encounter with the Sultan himself; whom having overthrown and slain in the second fight, Tangrolipix is by both armies proclaimed Sultan of Persia. This was about the year 1030. At this time there were among them two noted tribes, the Salghusian and the Oguzian. Of the former Tangrolipix, Cutlumoses, Melec and Ducat were the heads, of which Tangrolipix, as the chief of that clan, was settled on the throne of Persia. Cutlumoses, being furnished with an army to
act

act against the Christians, possessed himself of a great part of Asia Minor, and established himself at Iconium; which he made the seat of his kingdom. Melec and Ducat, the other two chiefs, were by the like favour of their cousin the Persian Sultan, vested with the sovereignty of Aleppo and Damascus, with their respective territories.* These princes and their successors made such a speedy progress towards the destruction of the Eastern Roman or Greek empire, that in all human appearance they must soon have utterly destroyed it, if their arms had not been checked by Divine Providence, till the appointed time was come. The holy war, as it was called, which began in the year 1096, and lasted two hundred years, greatly weakened the Turkish empire. And it was almost extinguished by the arms of the Mongul Tartars, under the renowned Gengischan and his successors; who in the space of about sixty years made themselves masters of all the four Sultanies. But the Tartar princes, quarreling among themselves, their power declined apace; and the Turkish empire, which was almost extinct, revived again in a few years under the other tribe, the Oгуzian, by means of Othman, who succeeded the

* Heylin's Cosmography.

the Salghufian Sultan Aladine, (of Iconium) and by whose consent in his life time he, Othman, took the title of Sultan in the year 1299, and founded a new empire. And the people afterwards, as well as their new empire, was called by his name. For they disclaimed the name of Turks, and assumed that of Othmans. It is however very certain they are a mixed multitude, the remains of the four Sultanies aforementioned. In this manner, and about this time, "The four angels
 " were loosed which were prepared for an
 " hour, and a day, and a month, and a year,
 " for to slay the third part of men."

The Latin or Western empire was broken to pieces under the four first trumpets. The Greek, or Eastern empire, was cruelly hurt and tormented under the fifth trumpet. And here, under the sixth, it is to be slain, and utterly destroyed. Accordingly all Asia Minor, Syria, Palestine, Egypt, Thrace, Macedon, Greece, and all the countries which formerly belonged to the Greek or Eastern Cæsars, the Othmans have conquered and subjugated to their dominion.

They passed over into Europe in the reign of Orchan, their second Emperor, in the year 1357. They took Constantinople in the
 reign

reign of Mahomet the Second, their seventh Emperor, in the year 1453. And in time all the remaining parts of the Greek empire shared the fate of the capital city.*

But it is now time to come to the text :

Of the SIXTH TRUMPET, or SECOND WOE.

CHAPTER IX.

Ver. 13. " And the sixth angel sounded,
" and I heard a voice from the four horns of
" the golden altar which is before God."

Ver. 14. " Saying to the sixth angel which
" had the trumpet, loose the four angels
" which are bound in the great river Eu-
" phrates."

Ver. 15. " And the four angels were loosed
" which were prepared for an hour, and a
" day, and a month, and a year, for to slay
" the third part of men."

Ver. 16. " And the number of the army
" of the horsemen were two hundred thousand
" thousand, and I heard the number of them."

Ver. 17. And thus I saw the horses in the
" vision, and them that sat on them, having
breast-

* Bishop Newton.

“ breast-plates of fire, and of jacinth, and
 “ brimstone. And the heads of the horses
 “ were as the heads of lions; and out of
 “ their mouths issued fire, and smoke, and
 “ brimstone.”

Ver. 18. “ By these three was the third
 “ part of men killed, by the fire, and by the
 “ smoke, and by the brimstone which issued
 “ out of their mouths.”

Ver. 19. “ For their power is in their
 “ mouths and in their tails, for their tails are
 “ like unto serpents, and had heads, and with
 “ them they do hurt.”

Ver. 20. “ And the rest of the men which
 “ were not killed by these plagues, yet re-
 “ pent not of the work of their hands;
 “ that they should not worship devils, and
 “ idols of gold, and silver, and brass, and
 “ stone, and wood, which neither can see,
 “ nor hear, nor walk.”

Ver. 21. “ Neither repented they of their
 “ murders, nor their sorceries, nor their
 “ fornication, nor their thefts.”

The first thing I would observe is, that by
 the 12th verse * it appears, that the second
 woe is not immediately to succeed the first.

Whether

* “ The first woe is ended, and behold there cometh
 “ two more woes hereafter.”

Whether the interval between the ending of the one and the beginning of the other should be long or short, is not said. The word *hereafter* seems however to imply the former. And agreeable to this, it was several centuries after the Saracenic empire was broken to pieces before the Turks invaded the Greek empire. And as the description of the first woe applies much better to Mahomet, and to the customs and manners of the Saracens, than it does to the Turks, there is a very high degree of probability, from the following considerations, that this sixth trumpet, or second woe, is rightly applied to the conquests and oppressions of the latter. First, as the Turks were much more dreadful, and caused greater destruction than the Saracens, so is the description of the second woe more terribly and more solemnly set forth than the first. “ And the sixth angel sounded, and I “ heard a voice from the four horns of the “ golden altar which is before God.” Which, as Bishop Newton observes, is a strong indication of the divine displeasure; and plainly intimates, that the sins of men must have been very great, when the altar which was their sanctuary and protection called aloud for vengeance.

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Secondly,

Secondly—The Saracens were never bound any where, though their commission was perhaps limited with respect to time.

Thirdly—The first woe is general. And the Saracens extended their conquests over the Western part of the Roman empire: Over Africa, Spain, Greece, and Italy, as well as the Eastern part. Whereas the second woe is confined to the “third part of men,” and who were to be killed; that is, utterly destroyed.

Fourthly—The Saracen locusts resembled horses prepared unto battle, but in this woe the army is expressly called horsemen,* which more precisely agrees with the Turkish† armies,

* “And the number of the army of the horsemen were two hundred thousand thousand, and I heard the number of them.”

XI. † The Turks seem to be the same people prophesied of by Daniel, (chap. *ix.* ver. 40, 41) and described as horsemen. “And the Kings of the North (Turks originally from Scythia) shall come against him (the fourth or Roman Empire) like a whirlwind, with chariots, and with horsemen, and with many ships; and he shall enter into the countries and pass over. But these shall escape out of his hand, Edom, and Moab, and the chief of the children of Ammon; whose countries are now possessed by the Arabians, whom the Turks could never conquer. Again, He shall stretch forth his hand
“also

mies, which are well known to be always exceedingly numerous, and to consist almost wholly of cavalry ; especially before the order of Janisaries was instituted.

Fifthly—It is said in the 17th verse, that “ the horsemen had breast-plates of fire, and “ jacinth, and brimstone.” It has been observed by the learned Jos. Mede, that the word breast-plate signifies also in the original a stomacher, a jacket, or waistcoat. And it is well known the Othmans much affected in their dress the colours of scarlet, blue, and yellow.

Lastly—The use of fire arms, which seems to be referred to by these words, “ out of their “ mouths (mouth symbolically signifies the “ means or the instruments employed) proceed fire, and smoke, and brimstone,” makes this part of the text totally inapplicable to the Saracens ; their empire having been destroyed several centuries before the invention of gunpowder ; but directly applicable to the Turks, who very early made use of this

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dreadful

“ also upon the countries ; and the land of Egypt shall “ not escape. But he shall have power over the treasures “ of gold, and silver ; and over all the precious things of “ Egypt. And the Lybians, and the Ethiopians in Africa shall be at his steps.”

dreadful combustible in war, and whose great success against the Christians may be chiefly attributed to it. Amurath the Second, a little after the middle of the fourteenth century, and not many years after the first mention in history of the invention of gunpowder, broke into Peloponnesus, and took several strong places by means of his artillery. And his son Mahomet the Second, at the siege of Constantinople, employed such great guns as were never made before. For forty days the wall of the city was battered, and so many breaches made in it, that the city was taken by assault, and an end put to the Greek empire.

It must be confessed, that what is said in the 19th verse, " Their power was in their mouth, and in their tails; for their tails are like unto serpents, and had heads, and with them they do hurt," agrees with the Saracens: But it equally well agrees with the Turks. They also do mischief, not only by their conquests but by spreading a false religion. They draw after them the same poisonous train as the Saracens. This particular characteristic applies equally well to both, and it may be worth remarking, that this remarkable particular has not been unnoticed in the prophecy. What is said in the 14th verse of the

four

four angels being loosed which were bound in the river Euphrates, I have already endeavoured to explain by applying it to what history records of the four Sultanies, or Turkish governments, which settled themselves in the neighbourhood of that river, (viz.) at Bagdat, Damascus, Aleppo, and Iconium. These had been restrained from extending their conquests, particularly, by the croisades, in the latter part of the 11th, the whole of the 12th, and almost the whole of the 13th century. But when an end was put to these wars, and the Christians had abandoned their conquests in Syria and Palestine, then the four angels were loosed, and permitted to invade and finally to destroy the Eastern Roman empire; which, as it had the name and kept up the pretensions of the antient Roman empire, is, in the 15th verse, described by the same figurative expression, as the Roman empire had been described under the four first trumpets, viz. "The third part of men."

I come now to the consideration of that part of the text in the same 15th verse, "prepared for an hour, and a month, and a day, and a year." It is the opinion of some commentators, that these words are capable of bearing this sense—prepared or ready (to execute the

the divine commission) at any time or for any time. Now I cannot help observing, that if this be the whole meaning, it means but little. It gives no new information to say, that when the four angels were loosed, they were then ready. And it would be little less than absurd to say, that they were ready at any time, if this is to be applied to their being ready as well before, as after they were loosed. Had it been said that they were prepared for an hour, *or* a day, *or* a month, *or* a year, then indeed the words might be fairly supposed to mean being ready for any space of time in general; but the copulative *and* being repeated before each particular portion of time mentioned, seems to confine the sense to their being prepared*, not for any time, but for a time limited and determined, or perhaps for the time there specified. I am inclined to think this latter sense to be the true one, as it seems to answer very well when applied to what is recorded in history, as will presently appear. Now as an hour, and a day, and a month, and a year, if taken in their strict literal sense are plainly of too short a duration for

* To be taken perhaps in the sense of appointed; "Thou hast prepared the light and the Sun." Psalm 74, ver. 17.

for effecting the purpose mentioned in the text, we are necessarily led to understand them as so many prophetic portions of time, viz. in the proportion of a day for a year, agreeable to what we find in other parts of scripture.

“ After the number of days in which ye
“ searched the land, even forty days; each
“ day for a year you shall bear your iniquity,
“ even forty years.” (Numb. chap. 14, v. 34)

“ I have appointed thee each day for a year.”
(Ezek. ch. 4, ver. 6,) Daniel’s 2300 days,
ch. 8. v. 14; his seventy weeks, ch. 9. v. 24.
and his 1290 and 1335 days ch. 12, v. 11, 12.
are plainly to be understood for so many years.

And indeed one cannot but suppose, was there no other reason for construing the present text after the same manner, that St. John would conform to the same mode of speaking which Moses, Ezekiel, and Daniel had used before. And as there can be but little doubt, that he followed the custom of the Jews in making the year to consist of 360 days, the four specific parts of time in the text will make 391 years and 15 days—the period allotted to the Othmans slaying “ the third part of men.” And as Bishop Newton observes, it is wonderfully remarkable, that the first conquests of the Othmans over the Christians was in the
year.

year * 1281, when Ortogrul, their second emperor, took the famous city of Kutabi. Now 391 years from that time will terminate in the year 1672, and in that year Mahomet the fourth took Caminiee from the Poles; and forty eight towns and villages in the territory of Caminiee were delivered up to the Sultan upon the treaty of peace. Whereupon Prince Cantemir has made this memorable reflection. " This was the last victory by which any advantage accrued to the Ottoman state, or any city or province was annexed to the ancient bounds of the empire."†

Other wars and slaughters, as he says, have ensued. The Turks even besieged Vienna in 1683. Belgrade and other places may have been taken from them and surrendered to them again; but still they have subdued no new state or potentate for upwards of one hundred years past. And in all probability, they never may again, their empire being manifestly on the decline. Their last treaty (1784) with the Russians is a proof of its being even rapidly so. Here then the prophecy and the event exactly

* Prince Cantemir's hist. b. 1, ch. 2, sec. 5, p. 10.

† Prince Cantemir's hist. book 3, ch. 12, sec. 18, page

exactly agree in the period of 391 years. And if a more accurate history could be procured which should mention the day on which Kutah was taken, there is reason to believe the like exactness would be found with respect to the 15 days.*

The remaining part of the text to be considered is contained in the 20th and 21st verses, which will of itself afford I think to every unprejudiced mind, no inconsiderable proof of the divine inspiration of the author.

Ver. 20. " And the rest of the men which
 " were not killed by these plagues, yet re-
 " pented not of the works of their hands,
 " that they should not worship devils, and
 " idols of gold, and silver, and brass, and
 " stone, and wood; which neither can see,
 " nor hear, nor walk."

Ver. 21. " Neither repented they of their
 " murders, nor of their forceries, nor of their
 " fornication, nor of their thefts."

Now though it is not said on what account the third part of men were slain, yet I think it may be fairly concluded from the consideration of the context, that it was for having been guilty of the same crimes which are here charged against those who were

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spared

* See Bishop Newton.

pared. And history abundantly testifies, that the Greek church first began the worship of saints and images; and that it was otherwise notoriously guilty of those other crimes specified in these two verses, at the time the Turks invaded and put an end to the empire. But what is still more remarkable is its being said, that the rest of the men who were not killed, did not repent. Now what says history to this particular? Did the rest of the men—the only remaining part, the western church, alter their conduct after the eastern was destroyed? Did they take warning from the dreadful example of its destruction, and forsake the worship of the Virgin Mary, angels and saints, to whom the apostate church of Rome applies, as their guardians and protectors? Nay have they not continued these anti-christian abominations even to this day?

Can it be easily supposed, that any man uninspired would, or could have prophesied in the very infancy of christianity, that believers in Jesus Christ, whose doctrine is so plainly directed to the worship of God alone, should ever become so corrupted, or so wretchedly besotted as to worship dead men and women—nay, their images! If it should be said, that
the

the text may be applied to the Pagan worship of idols. But how can this be reconciled with the punishment being confined to the third part of men; when the greatest part of the world was sunk, and had been sunk for ages and ages, in the most stupid and grossest idolatry. Not to mention, that the great subject of the book of Revelation is the Church of Christ. No events are there spoken of but what have in some respect or other relation to it. It has nothing at all to do with the Pagans or Paganism, abstractedly considered.— Besides the Greek church having been actually guilty of an idolatrous worship, and notoriously corrupt in its manners; and having been also actually destroyed, strongly confirms the application of the prediction to Christians.

“ The rest of the men ” are also accused of “ murders, and forceries, and fornication, “ and thefts.” Now the history of popery affords ample proof of the justness of the application of these charges to the western church. With respect to the first, viz. Murders, it is dreadful to think of the prodigious numbers of Christians who have been put to death by the church of Rome; and for what? Why for believing that Jesus Christ is the only mediator between God and man; and for

not believing in that most absurd doctrine of transubstantiation; and for not worshipping a bit of baked paste, &c. In short, they were put to death for adhering to the purity of the Christian faith. The number of those who have been thus inhumanly dealt with, amount in the opinion of some writers to (horrid to say) a million. Whereas the number of those who have been martyred by paganism do not exceed, according to a noted English* historian, four thousand. Well might St. John have been amazed at the foresight of so strange a scene. Christians put to death by Christians on account of religion! As to sorceries, that is amulets, exorcisms, pretended miracles and revelations;† it is well known, that the abominable system of popery has been chiefly supported by them. And it will answer equally well, if we understand with Dr. Samuel Clarke by the word sorceries, the many artificial methods of making men fancy themselves religious without the strict practice of virtue, which is indeed a leading feature and one of the most tempting baits of popery.

The remaining part of the text—their
“forni-

* Mr. Gibbon.

† See the library of a monastery.

“fornication” their public stews, and lewdness, for which Rome and her Monks are infamous, and their “thefts.”—their exactions and impositions by means of agnus deis, relicts, indulgencies, pardons, auricular confessions, and that master piece of popish priestcraft, masses for the dead, for their more speedy deliverance out of the fire of purgatory, are so applicable to the church of Rome, that they stand in need of no further comment.

Of the BEAST with SEVEN HEADS and
TEN HORNS.

CHAPTER XIII.

Ver. 1. “And I stood upon the sand of the sea, and I saw a beast rise up out of the sea, having seven heads and ten horns, and upon his horns ten crowns, and upon his heads the name of Blasphemy.”

Ver. 2. “And the beast which I saw was like unto a leopard, and his feet were as the feet of a bear, and his mouth as the mouth of a lion: and the dragon gave him his power, and his seat, and great authority.”

Ver. 3.

Ver. 3. " And I saw one of his heads, as
" it were wounded to death; and his deadly
" wound was healed: and all the world won-
" dered after the beast."

Ver. 4. " And they worshipped the dra-
" gon which gave power unto the beast: and
" they worshipped the beast, saying, who is
" like unto the beast? who is able to make
" war with him?"

Ver. 5. " And there was given unto him
" a mouth, speaking great things, and blas-
" phemies; and power was given unto him to
" continue forty and two months."

Ver. 6. " And he opened his mouth in
" blasphemy against God, to blaspheme his
" name, and his tabernacle, and them that
" dwell in heaven."

Ver. 7. " And it was given unto him to
" make war with the saints, and to overcome
" them: and power was given him over all
" kindreds, and tongues, and nations."

CHAPTER XVII.

Ver. 1. " And there come one of the
" seven angels which had the seven vials, and
" talked with me, saying unto me, come hi-
" ther

“ ther, I will shew unto thee the judgment of
 “ the great whore, that sitteth upon many
 “ waters.”

Ver. 2. With whom the kings of the earth
 “ have committed fornication, and the inha-
 “ biters of the earth have been made drunk
 “ with the wine of her fornication.”

Ver. 3. “ So he carried me away in the
 “ spirit into the wilderness: and I saw a wo-
 “ man sit upon a scarlet-coloured beast, full
 “ of names of blasphemy, having seven
 “ heads and ten horns.”

Ver. 4. “ And the woman was arrayed in
 “ purple and scarlet colour, and decked with
 “ gold and precious stones and pearls; hav-
 “ ing a golden cup in her hand, full of a-
 “ bominations and filthiness of her fornica-
 “ tion.”

Ver. 5. “ And upon her forehead was a
 “ name written, Mystery, Babylon the Great,
 “ the Mother of Harlots, and Abominations
 “ of the Earth.”

Ver. 6. And I saw the woman drunken
 “ with the blood of the faints, and with the
 “ blood of the martyrs of Jesus: and when
 “ I saw her, I wondered with great admi-
 “ ration.”

Ver,

Ver. 7. " And the angel said unto me,
 " wherefore didst thou marvel? I will tell
 " thee the mystery of the woman and of the
 " beast that carrieth her, which hath the
 " seven heads and ten horns."

Ver. 8th. " The beast that thou sawest,
 " was, and is not, and shall ascend out of
 " the bottomless pit, and go into perdition :
 " and they that dwell on earth shall wonder
 " (whose names were not written in the book
 " of life from the foundation of the world)
 " when they behold the beast that was, and
 " is not, and yet is."

Ver. 9. " And here is the mind which
 " hath wisdom. The seven heads are seven
 " mountains on which the woman sitteth."

Ver. 10. " And there are seven kings :
 " five are fallen, and one is and the other is
 " not yet come; and when he cometh, he
 " must continue a short space."

Ver. 11. " And the beast that was and is
 " not, even he is the eighth, and is of the
 " seven, and goeth into perdition."

Ver. 12. " And the ten horns which
 " thou sawest are ten kings, which have re-
 " ceived no kingdom as yet; but receive
 " power as kings one hour with the beast."

Ver.

Ver. 13. " These have one mind, and
" shall give their power and strength unto the
" beast."

Ver. 14. " These shall make war with
" the lamb, and the lamb shall overcome
" them: for he is the Lord of lords, and King
" of kings: and they that are with him are
" called, and chosen, and faithful.

Ver. 15. " And he saith unto me, the
" waters which thou sawest where the whore
" sitteth, are peoples, and multitudes, and
" nations, and tongues."

Ver. 16. And the ten horns which thou
" sawest upon the beast, these shall hate the
" whore, and shall make her desolate, and
" naked, and shall eat her flesh and burn her
" with fire."

Ver. 17. " For God has put in their
" hearts to fulfill his will, and to agree, and
" give their kingdom unto the beast, until
" the words of God shall be fulfilled."

Ver. 18. " And the woman which thou
" sawest is that great city, which reigneth
" over the kings of the earth."

CHAPTER XVIII.

Ver. 1. " And after these things I saw
" another angel come down from heaven,
" having great power, and the earth was
" lightened with his glory."

Ver. 2. " And he cried mightily with a
" strong voice, saying, Babylon the great is
" fallen, is fallen, and is become the habita-
" tion of devils, and the hold of every foul
" spirit, and a cage of every unclean and
" hateful bird."

Ver. 3. " For all nations have drank
" of the wine of the wrath of her fornica-
" tion, and the kings of the earth have com-
" mitted fornication with her, and the mer-
" chants of the earth are waxed rich through
" the abundance of her delicacies."

Ver. 4. " And I heard another voice
" from heaven saying, come out of her my
" people that ye be not partakers of her sins,
" and that ye receive not of her plagues."

Ver. 5. " For her sins have reached unto
" heaven, and God has remembered her ini-
" quities."

Ver. 8. " Therefore shall her plagues
" come in one day, death, and mourning, and
famine :

“ famine ; and she shall be utterly burnt with
“ fire ; for strong is the Lord God who judg-
“ eth her.”

Ver. 21. “ And a mighty angel took up a
“ stone like a great millstone, and cast it into the
“ sea, saying, thus with violence shall that
“ great city Babylon be thrown down, and
“ shall be found no more at all.”

CHAPTER XIX.

Ver. 1. “ And after these things I heard
“ a great voice of much people in heaven,
“ saying, Alleluia ; salvation, and glory, and
“ honour, and power unto the Lord our
“ God.”

Ver. 2. “ For true and righteous are his
“ judgements ; for he hath judged the great
“ whore which did corrupt the earth with
“ her fornication, and has avenged the blood of
“ his servants at her hand !

Ver. 3. “ And again they said, Alleluia :
“ and her smoke rose up for ever and ever.”*

It will not I believe be denied by any one
who is the least acquainted with the nature
K 2 of

* For an explanation at large of these four chapters, I
recommend Bishop Newton's dissertations on the prophe-
cies,

of symbolical language, that in the extracts above, a persecuting and blasphemous power is depicted. It is also very evident, by the 7th verse of the 13th chapter, that this power is said to persecute Christians: and, by the the last verse of the 17th chapter, to reside in the city of Rome. Now, as we know of two such powers only, viz. that exercised by the pagan Roman emperors, and that by the Popes, one or other of them must consequently be the object of the prophecy. If the latter, it is manifestly a prophecy most strikingly accomplished. For it is impossible to suppose, that the author, when he wrote it, could, without inspiration, have entertained, for a moment, an idea that such an enormous tyranny should ever exist in the Christian church; whose whole doctrine is so opposite to a spirit of persecution. Now, that Popery and not Paganism is meant, will appear to every unprejudiced mind very probable, I think, for the following reasons.

First, Because the Pagan persecuting power did not subsist 300 years after the date of this prophecy; and this power is predicted to prevail 1260 * years.

Secondly,

* Supposing, with the most eminent commentators, (Mede, Daubuz, Sir Isaac Newton, Lowman, Bishop New-

Secondly, Because in the description of the beast, (chap. xiii. ver. 1,) it is said, that he had seven heads and ten horns, and on his horns ten crowns. Now Rome was become Christian when the Roman empire was divided into ten (or many) distinct kingdoms.

Also, because what is said of the beast in the 3d verse, agrees much better with the history of Rome after she became Christian than before. “ And I saw one of his heads as if
“ it were wounded to death : and his deadly
“ wound was healed.”

The burning of the capitol, to which Dr. Hammond thought this deadly wound is to be referred, seems hardly of importance enough to be an object of prophecy. And yet this learned man could not find any part of the Pagan Roman history more applicable to it than this : which is a strong proof, in my opinion, of the weakness of his system. But in the history of Christian Rome there is a very important event, which seems to answer very well to this prophecy—viz. The REFORMATION ; by which near one half of Europe fell off from the Pope. Some eminent

ton, &c.) the forty-two months, mentioned in the text, to be rightly interpreted to mean so many years as there are days in that number of months.

nent commentators, however, think it received its accomplishment, when an end was put to the imperial government by Odoacer; or rather, when Rome was reduced to a dukedom, and made tributary to the Exarchate of Ravenna, and when there was not the least probability of her ever being the seat of empire again. It is added, "and all the world wondered after the beast."

Now it is very certain the revival of sovereign power under the Popes in that city, and of such a nature too, was sufficient to excite the greatest wonder. It had indeed nothing parallel to it in the history of the world. The text goes on, "and they worshipped the dragon which gave power unto the beast; and they worshipped the beast, saying, Who is like unto the beast? Who is able to make war with him?"

The Romanist, I know, will be ready to apply all this to the Pagan Roman Emperors: but if it is applicable to them, it is at least equally so to the Popes. For many ages kings and emperors could not be compared with them. The thunder of their bulls silenced them all. It is added, "and there was given unto him a mouth speaking great things, and blasphemies." Now who ever spake such

such great things as the popes of Rome — claiming infallibility, excommunicating princes, and absolving subjects from their allegiance. Now where will the Romanist go for the application of this part of the prophecy? To the ridiculous claims and boastings of Caligula or Domitian? But this, I fear, will scarce serve his turn better than the burning the capitol did Dr. Hammond on another occasion. And with respect to blasphemy, who cannot see the justness of the application of it to the popes; who arrogated to themselves divine honours, and attributed to the creature what solely belongs to the Creator, by introducing the worship of angels and even dead men; nay, their very images.

In the 7th verse it is said, “ And it was
 “ given unto him to make war with the saints,
 “ and to overcome them: and power was gi-
 “ ven them over all kindreds, and tongues,
 “ and nations.” It may indeed be said, that it was given unto the Pagan persecuting power to make war with the saints; but I don’t see how this power can be said to have overcome them. For in this particular, the case seems just the reverse. Besides, what comparison is there between the number of Christians persecuted or put to death by the Pagan Roman emperors

emperors and those who thus suffered by the authority of the popes? And it is well known, that the popes reigned for ages over the consciences of all Christians, in all the countries of the western Roman empire. Their decrees were implicitly submitted to, and their persons even adored: a tyranny this, more despotic perhaps than was ever exercised by the most absolute monarch.

Thirdly, Because what is said (chap. xvii. verse 2) of the great whore that sitteth on many waters, ("with whom the kings of the earth have committed fornication, and the inhabitants of the earth have been made drunk with the wine of her fornication,") does by no means agree with the character of Pagan Rome. So far from intoxicating the conquered nations with her idolatry, she permitted them to continue in the religion of their ancestors, and to worship their own gods after their own rituals. But how stands the matter with respect to papal Rome? I venture to say, that it is impossible a description in words can more justly characterise her than those of the text. Also, because the description of the woman (chap. 17, ver. 4) better suits the character of Papal than Pagan Rome. Donatus, a Roman Catholic writer, has drawn

a com-

a comparison between ancient and modern Rome; and asserts the superiority of his own church in the pomp and splendor of her religious ceremonies. Also, because the titles by which the woman is distinguished (chap. xvii. ver. 5) does not suit Pagan Rome more than any other Pagan city.

Fourthly, Because it is very improbable that St. John (whom we cannot but suppose to have been at least a man of common sense) would have expressed any wonder at Pagans persecuting Christians. But it is very natural to suppose, he must have been struck with the greatest astonishment, when he discovered that Christians would persecute Christians on account of religion. Besides, (as has been remarked before) there is no proportion between the number of Christians put to death on account of religion by Pagans, and those put to death for the same reason by Papists.

Fifthly, Because by what is said, chap. xiii. verse 2, of the dragons giving the beast his power, his seat, and great authority, it appears that the beast is the successor of the dragon. Now that the dragon is made to represent the persecuting power of Pagan Rome seems evident from what is said of him in se-

veral

veral parts of the Revelation; particularly in the 12th chapter.

Sixthly, Because it is evident by what is mentioned in several parts of the 18th and 19th chapters, relating to the destruction of that city where this power is seated, and which reigned over the kings of the earth (which can be no other than Rome, as has been observed before) that it would be complete and final. How can this be said of Pagan Rome? But if the Romanist will still absurdly persist in maintaining it, I hope he will allow, that ever since this final destruction, it has been inhabited by devils, and become the habitation of every impure spirit, and the cage of every unclean bird. For these are plainly said will be its only inhabitants from the time of this destruction *for ever*. And here, by the way, I may observe, that by this prediction Rome will exhibit to our posterity another dreadful instance of the vengeance of heaven; which, tho' long delayed, never fails of overtaking, at length, the wickedness of man.

Seventhly, Because the destruction of the beast with two horns, chap. xiii. who "exerciseth all the power of the first beast before him, and causeth the earth and them that dwell therein to worship the beast,"

&c."

" &c." applies easily enough to the body of the Roman clergy in general, regular and secular. For it seems plainly to denote a power of the same nature with the first, (understanding by the first, popery in the abstract—or the spiritual power exercised by the pope, its image or representative) and by which indeed the power of the first is supported. But I defy all ingenuity to apply what is said of the beast with two horns easily, or indeed at all, to Paganism: the *philosophy* of the bishop of Meaux and Grotius; or the *sorcerers* and *magicians* of Dr. Hammond, not excepted.

Eighthly, Because popery, the great corruption of Christianity, seems to have been predicted by Daniel* and by St. Paul,† as well

* Daniel, chap. vii. ver. 24. "And the ten horns out of this kingdom are ten kings that shall arise; and another shall arise after them, and he shall be diverse from the first; and he shall subdue three kings."

Ver. 25. "And he shall speak great things against the Most High, and shall wear out the saints of the Most High, and think to change times and laws: and they shall be given into his hand until a time and times and the dividing of time, &c."

† Thessalonians, chap. ii. ver. 3. "Let no man deceive you by any means, for that day shall not come except there come a falling away first, and that man of sin be revealed, the son of perdition,"

well as by our author ; and consequently, these several predictions serve mutually to confirm and corroborate each other.

Lastly, Because all the characteristic marks of the beast with seven heads and ten horns, without exception, are fairly applicable to popery ; which is far from being the case with respect to paganism. That each of them being a tyrannical power, persecuting Christians, and whose head quarters (if I may so call it) were in Rome, it could not well be otherwise, but that several of those marks should suit them both. It is sufficient for the argument if it has been made appear, that they do all agree with the former, and do not with the latter ; which makes it clearly decisive in favour of the application of the prophecy to **POPERY.**

Ver. 4. " Who opposeth and exalteth himself above
" all that is called God, or that is worshipped ; so that
" he as God sitteth in the *temple of God*, shewing himself
" that he is God."

Ver. 9. " Even him whose coming is after the work-
" ing of Satan, with all power, and signs, and lying
" wonders, &c."

END OF THE SECOND PART.

GENERAL

GENERAL REMARKS.

BEFORE I conclude, it may not be amiss to observe, by way of recapitulation, that I have endeavoured to make it appear, first, that it is improbable either an enthusiast or an impostor would have undertaken such a work as the book of Revelation:—Secondly, That if either of them had undertaken it, it is not only highly improbable he would have delivered such a sound morality as is found in every part of it, but also highly improbable that he would not, in the course of so long a work, have betrayed, by some unequivocal marks, the hand of one or other of those two characters: Thirdly, That it is improbable, the book would have been held in the high estimation we find it was, at the time of it's first publication, if either of them had really been the author:—Lastly, That it is very improbable an enthusiast or an impostor should have made predictions as should be found, in
such

such a variety of instances, to hold so striking a correspondence with the events.

Should the Deist think I lay greater stress on this argument than it can bear, I could wish he would try to give a fair solution of these things himself. I am greatly mistaken if he would not find the task much more difficult than he may be at present aware of. Let him tell us who or what character it was that he supposes wrote the book; explain his motive for having taken the pains to write it; and how it came to pass, that Justin Martyr, (not to mention others) who flourished not above forty years after it was written, could have been induced to have held it in the esteem we find, from his writings, he did; or was not able to form as good a judgment as any modern sceptic, whether the work is what it claims to be, or the invention of an impostor, or the dream of an enthusiast. But this is not all the Deist has to do. It is also incumbent upon him to give a rational account of that correspondence (even though only seeming) between the predictions in that book and events recorded in history. Till he has done this let him not charge others with credulity.*

That

* Should the Deist, in order to evade the force of this reasoning (as if he was determined to deceive himself)

That the predictions do seem to correspond with the events, is what I think he will not deny. And if to this consideration he will add those of the three preceding articles, I think there must be some unhappy bias on his mind, if their junction does not make him suspect at least, that the author might have been that very character which he assumed. And indeed, to have these circumstances† in its favour, and not to be allowed a probability of being true, can only be owing either

to have recourse to this cavil, that however strong the appearance of a correspondence between them may be, yet still it remains doubtful whether it be real. That this way of arguing is a mere cavil, and a wretched one too, appears from hence; that any proof short of certainty may be said to be doubtful. But what then? Does he mean, that whatever is doubtful is not to be believed? But if nothing less than certainty will satisfy him, I wish he would explain, by some proper illustration, what he means by the word.

† It surely need not be remarked, that where many circumstances concur in proof of any cause, though each of them singly taken, may not be thought of weight sufficient on which to ground a decision, do yet, when collectively taken, produce an evidence, which to every unprejudiced mind is perfectly satisfactory and convincing. I beg the Deist to apply this remark here particularly made with a view to the truth of the book of Revelation, to the cause of Christianity in general.

to not taking the matter into due consideration, or to very great prejudice. But to say, that the whole, notwithstanding these circumstances, is nothing but a heap of stuff and nonsense, is the language of one who cares not what he says; or of one who is, (I was going to say) determined not to be convinced; foreseeing his conviction would render too uneasy to him a course of life, which perhaps, without this conviction, he more than suspects is not to be justified; but which he is yet boldly resolved to pursue. Thus * dreading conviction, he will not examine, and then pleads in justification of his infidelity, and as an apology for the indulgence he allows himself in the gratification of his passions, his want of conviction of the truth of that religion which he well knows strictly forbids it.

Having supposed that the Deist will hardly deny that the predictions seem to correspond with the events, it may not be amiss for his further satisfaction on this point, to take up again the consideration of some of the predictions already explained, in order to see whether the interpretation given to the characteristic marks by which they are described

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* The Deist will, perhaps, deny his dreading conviction. But will he also deny his neglecting to examine?

is easy and natural, or wrested and strained, for the purpose of making out, at all events, this seeming correspondence. And here it may not perhaps be improper (on account of readers who may have been but little conversant with these subjects) to observe, that the prophetic parts of scripture (and indeed all oriental writings) abound not only with poetical and highly figurative, but with emblematical and symbolical expressions. Another observation I would make is, that the grand object of the book of Revelation is the church of Christ; and that all the events therein predicted, have, in some way or other, relation to it. This being premised, I observe, that there is in the records of history a very remarkable event which had a very particular relation to, and greatly affected it, viz. The rise of the Mahomedan imposture, with the ravages of the Saracens. Now if it should be found, that there are in this book descriptions of men and things that carry with them a strong appearance of their having relation to that event, it must in all fair reasoning be allowed, that this affords a strong presumption the author was in truth that very character which he assumed. And this, without taking into the account the three other considerations first mentioned.

The Mahomedan Imposture.

HISTORY informs us, that about the year 606, a person, named Mahomet, pretended to have received a revelation from the angel Gabriel, in a solitary cave near Mecca; that in 612 he proclaimed himself an apostle of God, and began to preach publicly; over how great a part of the world his imposture soon prevailed is too well known to need being here repeated,

The author of the book of Revelation says,
 “ I saw a star fall from heaven unto the earth,
 “ and to him was given the key of the bot-
 “ tomless pit. And he opened the bottomless
 “ pit, and there arose a smoke out of the pit,
 “ as the smoke of a great furnace; and the
 “ sun and air were darkened by reason of the
 “ smoke out of the pit.”

It may be deemed, perhaps, trifling with my reader to observe, that this prophetic description cannot be taken literally. And I appeal to the deist himself, whether there is any thing wrested or strained in understanding the symbolical term a STAR to mean, in this place, some extraordinary person, some ruling power, some visible agent. And when it is said, that
 a key

a key was given him ; whether this does not plainly denote some trust or power committed to this agent, made use of by God to bring about the designs of his providence. And when it is further said, that with this key he opened an abyfs from which a smoke arose that darkened the sun and air, (surely no improper emblematical representation of a false religion being set up, filling the minds of men with darkness and error) our thoughts seem to be directed to Mahomet ; who was certainly a very extraordinary person, and a very conspicuous and active agent ; and who pretended to be a messenger and a prophet sent from God (a star falling from heaven). And as he broached a false religion, which in a few years overspread a great part of the world, it seems presumable at first sight, that this great impostor *might* be the very person prefigured by the symbol of a star, to whom a key was given, &c. But if we proceed with the description, and find it added, that out of the smoke there came locusts upon the earth, and that it was commanded them, that they should not hurt the grafs of the earth, neither any green thing, neither any tree, but only such men who have not the seal of God in their foreheads ; and

then consider, that it was the very pretence* of Mahomet to punish idolaters, and also Christians for their idolatry in worshipping saints, and even their images: and if to this consideration we add that of the characteristic marks of these locusts, viz. that “their shapes
 “were as horses prepared unto battle, and on
 “their heads were crowns, as it were crowns
 “of gold; and their faces were as the faces
 “of men. And they had hair as the hair of
 “women, &c.” (I here refer the reader to the full explanation of the Fifth Trumpet before given) and compare them with the ravages, customs, and manners of the Saracens under Mahomet and his successors: not to mention, that there is no one particular in the whole prophetic description but what is easily applicable to them:—I say, all these circumstances put together (with this further consideration, that an event which so greatly affected the Christian church, could very probably

* This was far from being the case with the Goths, Huns, and Vandals, in their invasions—being idolaters themselves; and the Pope never pretended to punish idolatry: nay he has been always charged with idolatry himself. So that there is no other person or nation we can go to for the application of this prophecy but Mahomet and the Saracens, which is surely a strong presumption that it is rightly applied to him and them.

bably not have passed unnoticed in a divine prophecy, professedly treating of such future events as should in any remarkable manner affect it) I think the most scrupulous sceptic must allow, that there is an appearance at least, if not a great probability, of the justness of the application of this prophecy to the history of Mahomet and the Saracens. I might proceed in the same manner with respect to the predictions in the prophecy of the beast with seven heads and ten horns, and in that of the four angels being loosed from the river Euphrates. But for fear of trespassing too much on the reader's patience, I beg to refer him to what has been already done on these heads. Enough, I hope, has been said to put it out of all dispute, that the characteristic marks found in those predictions carry with them a strong appearance of a correspondence between them and what history records of that monster popery, and of the destruction of the Greek empire and Eastern church by the Turks. Which is sufficient for my present argument.

Finally, I have endeavoured to shew, that if there be any such thing in the world as folly, the Deist is one who certainly comes in for a large portion of it. If he disclaims it,
let

let him produce his strong argument, on which he so nobly relies:—in which he so confidently places his consolation and security; infomuch, as not to be under the *least* apprehension of suffering any kind of evil or misfortune on account of his having rejected Christianity, *although Christianity should prove to be true*. For I suppose he does not pretend to be certain it is false. If he derives this argument from the insufficiency of evidence,* I would ask him a plain question—how he can be sure this plea will be admitted? What! that evidence not sufficient which God thinks sufficient? But it is plain, he may say, it was not sufficient for him. Very plain indeed. But is it as plain, that he (an accountable being) took all the pains he ought to have done in a matter of such importance; and used his sincere and best endeavours in examining the evidence† for the truth of it? Is it

* And indeed I do not see on what other pretence he can do it. For whatever difficulties he may discover in any part of Christianity; or whatever objections he may have to the scheme itself, the ultimate and decisive question will still be this—Whether the evidence for the truth of it be not reasonably sufficient (notwithstanding these difficulties and objections) to induce the belief of it.

† I repeat again (what deserves the Deist's most serious and frequent consideration) that more than a reasonable degree of evidence is plainly unsuitable to a state of trial.

it as plain he was not prejudiced against it, either on account of its humiliating doctrines of meekness, humbleness of mind, and the forgiveness of injuries? Doctrines so offensive to the high stomach of greatness, and the vain conceit of learning? or on account of its mortifying precepts of temperance and chastity?—equally offensive to the pampered appetite of sensuality. Now I should be glad to know, even as a matter of curiosity, what kind of argument he makes use of to persuade himself that he is certain of being able on the great day of accounts, to give satisfactory answers to these questions. I have always understood it to be a thing so difficult as hardly ever to be expected, that any man should be so devoid of prejudice in his own favor as to be able to form a true judgment of his own character, and the merit or demerit of his own actions. And yet that every Deist must depend on his being able to do it, is evident. For on the supposition of his being conscious, that he may be mistaken in his notion of Christianity's being an imposture, (for as I said before, I suppose he does not pretend to be certain it is so) there is no other possible idea
that

that can afford him any hope of security against his not being in *danger* of suffering hereafter for his having rejected it, should it prove to be true. For whatever security against it he may flatter himself he derives from this specious argument, that a man cannot believe what does not appear to him to be credible; and whatever difficulties he may discover in Christianity, which he hopes will justify him for his having rejected it; yet, he cannot, one would think, fondly fancy he will be allowed to avail himself of such pleas, unless he can, at the same time, clear himself of the charges implied in the above-mentioned questions. This therefore is, I apprehend, the grand point in issue; and which I hope every Deist, who deigns to give this little well meant work his perusal, will seriously consider.

As one of my chief motives for this publication, is to induce the Deist, by exposing the danger of unbelief, to examine a little more attentively into the evidence for the truth of the Christian Religion than he has perhaps hitherto done, I shall venture to trespass a little more on the reader's patience by repeating again the argument I have just quitted, and putting it in the form of dialogue. This I do, because

because the point aimed at will be set in a stronger light this way than the other.

Deist. But would you have me believe in the Christian religion, when from the many difficulties, inconsistencies, and even contradictions I discover in it, it does not appear to me credible that it is a revelation from God?

Believer. By no means. I do not want you to believe what does not appear to you credible. This would be not only unreasonable but absurd. But I would ask you, if, notwithstanding these difficulties, inconsistencies, and even contradictions which you say you discover in Christianity, you are *certain* it is false?

Deist. No, I do not pretend to say that I am certain it is false.

Believer. If you are not certain it is false, you will allow, I suppose, that it may be true?

Deist. To be sure I do: for one implies the other.

Believer. As you allow it may be true, I may fairly suppose (if only for argument's sake) that it is so. And now I would ask you, whether you do not think, that when God gave this revelation of his will to mankind, it was his design that it should be believed?

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Deist.

Deist. No doubt but I think so.

Believer. And in order to its being believed, do not you also think, he would have afforded such a degree of evidence in attestation of its proceeding really from him as would be sufficient to induce the belief of it?

Deist. It would indeed be absurd to suppose the contrary.

Believer. But to those who do not believe it, the evidence appears to have been insufficient for the purpose intended.

Deist. This is the very thing I say myself. The evidence in its favour appears to me not sufficient to overcome the difficulties, &c. which I discover in it: for which reason I cannot believe it.

Believer. As you have allowed that God has given a sufficient degree of evidence to induce the belief of it (you will please to remember we are now arguing on the supposition of its being true) do not you suspect, as it does not seem sufficient for you, that the fault may possibly lie in yourself?

Deist. The fault must lie somewhere, that is certain. Now I honestly own, that it would favour too strongly of prejudice was I to deny the *possibility* of my laying greater stress on the difficulties than they can bear, and giving less credit

credit to the evidence than it fairly deserves. But though this should be true, it may be no fault of mine. It may be owing, perhaps, to the nature of my education; or very possibly to something peculiar in my frame and constitution, that prevents my seeing these things in their proper light. Now if this should be the case, how can I be answerable for my unbelief?

Believer. But if this should not be the case, I suppose you will allow that you may be answerable for your unbelief. But who can determine this point? You yourself, I should suppose, would be a very unfit judge in your own cause. In short, neither you, nor I, nor any man can determine it. It is known only to God, the searcher of hearts, whether your unbelief is owing to the nature of your education, or to something peculiar in your frame and constitution, on the one hand; or, on the other, to your not having taken all the pains you ought to have done in examining the evidence he has thought sufficient to give in attestation of its truth, or to your being prejudiced against it, because it mortifies your pride in preaching humility—a doctrine which perhaps you despise: or because it thwarts and checks the indulgence of

your sensual appetites, in preaching temperance and chastity—a doctrine which perhaps you hate. Now as it is uncertain how this important question may be decided, it is clear to demonstration, that should you die in your unbelief of the Christian religion, you will be in *danger* of suffering for it. And it is equally clear, I think, that if your plea of justification for your having rejected the belief of it should be found invalid, you will most *certainly* suffer. Remember, we are still arguing on the supposition of the Christian religion being true. So that nothing less than the certainty of its being false can afford you any security in your present state of unbelief. What kind of punishment you may suffer, or for what length of time, it is not for me to say. At any rate you cannot hope to receive what is promised (and much is promised) to the believer. And I should suppose you have some reason to fear you will be made to suffer what is threatened (and something is threatened) to the unbeliever. You may tell me, perhaps, that God is a being of infinite mercy; and there can be no doubt but he is so. But I suppose you can hardly persuade yourself,

self, that the moral Governour of the universe will be mocked.

And now on the whole, can you deny, that if you should die in your unbelief, and the Christian Religion should prove true, but that you will be in *danger* of suffering for it?

Deist. I do not indeed see how I can well deny it. But yet methinks ———

I have dwelt so much on this point, (which some readers may think too plain to admit of any dispute) because I have known several Deists who would not allow that they need give themselves any trouble about the Christian religion. It would be the same thing to them, they said, whether it was true or false. Strange infatuation! The Deist boldly says, I am not afraid to stand at the bar on my own strength; only allow me what the infirmity of my nature justly demands, I ask no more. Alas, where is the man who can safely put his future state of happiness and misery on this issue? The very best of the sons of men on the recollection of many parts of his past life, with every allowance he could claim for the infirmity of his nature, would, I should imagine, on that decisive day, (when the indulgence of his passions will be at an end, and the

the veil of self-love, which in this life hid him from himself, removed) stand self condemned.

It would be an extreme piece of vanity to flatter myself with the conceit, that what I have said in the course of this work will remove all the prejudices of the unbeliever. He that knows any thing of human nature knows, that where the will is wanting, arguments are seldom found sufficient to produce conviction. Neither have I pretended to prove that Christianity is certainly true. But I have pretended to prove that it is probably so. Nay, so highly probable, that it is next to impossible there could have been such a variety of proofs in it's favour had it been false. Proofs of every kind—positive, and presumptive. Twelve poor illiterate * Jews preach the purest, and most sublime morality; and propagate, to their own detriment, an imposture. An imposture? Incredible, &c. &c. &c. In short, the scheme of Christianity from the first

* The Deist must certainly allow, that Christianity was first preached by Jews, whatever title he gives them. Can he believe they did not know it, if it was an imposture? And if they did know it, can he give himself any satisfactory reason why they should preach it?

first dawn of it, in these remarkable words, "The seed of the woman shall bruise the serpent's head," and the gradual unfoldings of it in the lives of the patriarchs, and it's brighter display in the series of prophecy contained in that most wonderful history of the Jewish dispensation, to its glorious manifestation by the life, death, resurrection, and ascension of Jesus Christ; and it's establishment in the Roman empire by the subversion of Paganism; and (may I be permitted to add) *in due time*, to it's final and full display in the salvation of *all* the sons of Adam:* when the "mystery of God will be perfected and God shall be all in all." I say this scheme has too many supports and is too strongly cemented to fear any assault that ancient, or modern, or future infidelity can make against it.

C O N-

* This by many may be thought wild and romantic. To me it appears rational, and consistent. The architecture is worthy the architect. It will not surely be said, that this scheme is too good for infinite benevolence to plan, or too difficult for infinite wisdom and power to execute. But for further satisfaction on this article, I recommend the reader to a late excellent publication, entitled "The Salvation of all Men." Dilly, London. In which he will find many strong reasons advanced in proof of it's being reconcileable with the doctrines of scripture.

CONCLUSION.

I conclude with two Propositions, and with a Remark upon them.

PROPOSITION I.

The author of the book of Revelation assumed the character of a prophet, and undertook to foretell events which should befall or affect the Church of Christ.

PROPOSITION II.

The Mahomedan imposture with the ravages of the Saracens, Popery, and the destruction of the Greek empire by the Turks, were three remarkable events which did greatly affect it.

REMARK.

Now on the supposition of the author's having been a true prophet, there would be the strongest presumption that these events would not have been unnoticed. And as the predictions

tions in the ninth, thirteenth, seventeenth, and eighteenth chapters, carry with them a strong appearance of a correspondence between them and those events, it must in all fair reasoning be concluded, that there is a great probability the author was really inspired. Let the Deist therefore either disprove this appearance, or rationally account for it on any other hypothesis than that of the inspiration of the author. *Et erit mihi, &c.*

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N O T E S

Referred to in the First Part of this Work.

N O T E I. Page 1.

IT may possibly be thought by some that the expression *which must shortly come to pass*, points to a very short period, so that the whole prophecy should be accomplished in a very few years after the vision. This expression will indeed shew the accomplishment of the things foretold in this prophecy was soon to begin. But I think it can determine nothing at all concerning the time when it was to end, especially against full evidence in the same book of prophecy, that the period is much longer, and reaches from the time of the vision to a very remote period. Of this many proofs might easily be brought from a great number of places in the prophecy itself. But there is one general argument of no small weight, arising from the consideration of the perpetual use of this prophecy to the church in all ages; not only by holding out a growing evidence for the truth of christianity, but by affording consolation and support to all true professors of it, that though it should be opposed and oppressed, (as it notoriously has been for many ages and still is by the Mahom-

medan imposture, and in all Popish countries; or ridiculed or despised, as it unhappily is, in a great measure, in our own) yet it should prove in the end victorious. It is observed by that great divine Dr. S. Clark, that God did from the beginning make good all along, and continued to his church or true worshippers, a promise that truth and virtue shall finally prevail over the spirit of error and wickedness; of delusion and disobedience.*

N O T E II. Page 2.

P R I N C I P L E S O F D E I S M.

I. That there is one God, eternal, infinite in power, wisdom and goodness; the creator, preserver, and governor of the universe.

II. That man, as well as all other animals, was designed for happiness.

III. That man was endued with the faculty of reason; which if properly attended to, was sufficient for his attaining that happiness.

IV. That however low and wretched man had reduced himself to by the abuse of his reason, God did never, in any one instance whatever, interpose in an extraordinary, or what is called miraculous manner, in order to recover him from it.

Now there appears to me in this last tenet not only something that does not well accord with the first, but something that is strangely peremptory and decisive. And when I consider the gross darkness in which the whole Pagan world lay involved for ages, with respect to the great article of religion, insomuch that man by the absurdities of his creed, seemed not only to have lost the use of his reason;

* See Lowman's Preface to his Paraphrase on the Revelation.

reason; but by the impurities and cruelties practised in the ceremonies of it, to have degraded himself even below the condition of the brutes. And when, at the same time, I reflect, that had man been left to himself, he would never perhaps have been able to have extricated himself from this wretched state; and that in these circumstances his merciful creator would, probably, interfere in some extraordinary way, in order to help him out of it. And, lastly, when I further consider on what slight foundation this dogma of the Deist seems to rest, and how much he ventures to build upon it (no less, gentle reader, than the disbelief of all revealed religion) I confess I stand amazed. And did not experience but too fully prove the contrary, I should indeed think it impossible to find a single person who could be hardy enough to lay any stress, much less his last great stake upon the truth of it.

N O T E III. Page 5.

The celebrated Joseph Mede, speaking of the Apocalypse, says, "It has more human (not to speak of divine) authority than any other book of the New Testament besides, even from the time it was first delivered." And Sir Isaac Newton, to the same purpose, says, "I do not find any other book of the New Testament so strongly attested, or commented upon so early as this of the Apocalypse." But I refer the reader for more ample satisfaction on this point, to Bishop Halifax on the prophecies; and to a late excellent publication in answer to Mr. Gibbon's five secondary causes for the growth of christianity. By the Rev. Henry Taylor, Author of Ben Mordecai's Apology.

N O T E IV. Page 6.

The Jews have been dispersed for many ages, and still continue a distinct people. This never happened to any other nation. It was foretold of the Jews, that they should be so dispersed. This was never foretold of any other people. Put both these considerations together---I mean the prediction and the event. Will it be said it is *possible* that the prophets might by mere chance have thought of predicting such a strange event. And also, that it was *possible* the event might, by mere chance, have answered such a strange prediction. To say this is being hard drove indeed. But to give it as a reason, or to rely upon it as a justification for the disbelief of the prophecy, as such, would be such an instance of prejudice, self-delusion, or sturdy obstinacy, as one would think is no where to be found.

N O T E V. Page 9,

Though it is against my present purpose to enter into a discussion of those proofs, which might easily fill a volume, (for as Bishop Hurd well observes, there is scarce a page in the gospels, which, to an attentive reader may not afford a striking proof of their divine original) I shall, however, with the reader's leave, indulge myself in a few remarks on the conduct of those first witnesses for the truth of christianity. I mean the apostles.

On supposing with the Deist, that Christianity is an imposture, I am under some difficulty in what light to look upon them, whether of fools or knaves. If the former, it appears to me exceedingly odd, that twelve fools should just at the same time take it into their heads, that they had heard and seen exactly the same things, though not even one of them had either heard or seen them: that their folly

folly should be so whimsically extravagant as to make them fancy they performed many miracles, when in truth they had not performed a single one. And what is still more exceedingly odd, if it be possible, that they should continue in this Quixote state, not for some days only, or weeks, or months, but for years together; nay, for their whole lives after, so that neither length of time, nor separation from each other, nor threats, nor punishments, could bring any one of them to his sober senses again.

On the other hand, if they were knaves they seem to have been even in that case, no less fools than in the other. For what did they propose to themselves? and what in truth did they get by this attempt to impose on the world? I do not find that any one of them made his fortune by it.

But farther. What sort of person did they choose for their leader? Some renowned warrior, or celebrated philosopher? In short, some one who, by his rank, his fortune, or his talents, could engage the attention, or command the respect of the world? Instead of a character of this sort they pitched upon the son of a carpenter; who after living in poverty, died on the cross. Their countrymen expected a deliverer—a conquering and triumphant Messiah; and these impostors held out to them the insulting spectacle of a crucified Jesus. Their countrymen wished for nothing so much as to shake off the yoke of the Romans; and these politic impostors preached submission to Governors, and recommended no war but against vice. Their conduct towards the Pagans was just as wise. But I shall leave the Deist to pursue the subject himself, (there is a large field open to him) if he is not yet convinced, that Christianity is not the contrivance of man.*

The Deist wonders, that if Jesus Christ performed many miracles, how it happened that every Jew who was present

* See some excellent French Letters by Mr. Roustan, London;

present at the performance of any of them, was not immediately converted. Without endeavouring to remove his doubts on this head (Celfus and Porphyry may perhaps contribute a little towards it) I would ask him how he can persuade himself, that so many should have been converted, had none at all been performed. For surely, it is not easy to suppose any thing less could have been sufficient to have induced so many to take a step which (not to mention other disagreeable circumstances) could not but bring them into disgrace and contempt with all their friends and relations; which of all misfortunes, is, perhaps, the most difficult for an ingenuous mind to bear. If no miracle had been performed, is it at all probable, that when St. Matthew, for example, published his gospel, he would have made such particular mention of so many having been performed? which, according to the Deist, was nothing less than publishing a heap of barefaced and impudent lies. That the Deist should so easily swallow this particular only (he would find a few others of as hard digestion as this, if he would but just run over the articles of *his own creed*) and yet so readily accuse others of credulity, appears to me a little inconsistent, if not uncandid.

N O T E VI. Page 9.

“ La majesté des écrit m'étonne; la sainteté de l'ures
 “ évangile parle à mon cœur. Voyez les livres des philosophes avec toute leur pompe; qu'ils sont petits près
 “ de celui là. Se peut il qu'un livre à la fois, si sublime
 “ & si sage soit l'ouvrage des hommes? Se peut-il que
 “ celui dont il fait l'histoire ne soit qu'un homme lui
 “ même? &c. (Roussseau.) To this eulogium on the
 Scriptures, by Rosseau, I shall beg leave to add some observations by a late writer of our own; which being pertinent

inent to the present subject, I hope the reader will not think too long.

“ If we take a view of the sacred temple of the Christian religion in all its parts, and the manner of its being raised to it's full size and proportion, it must appear to have been begun, carried on, and ended, not by human contrivance and wisdom, but by the providence and power of God. In the first place, the undertaking itself manifestly proves it's origin. For who is this that takes upon him to subdue a national prejudice, supported by authority, confirmed by time, and flattering the views and expectations, and desires of the whole Jewish people? * Who is it that presumes to give a true sense and interpretation to the prophecies, which the studies of the learned could not recover; and even to supersede and abrogate the law of Moses; which they all knew to be of divine institution, and believed to be of perpetual obligation? Who is it that pretends to correct and new model the received system of morality, in opposition to the established teachers of it, the learned Rabbies of Israel; and to set at naught their authority, which was universally acknowledged and revered? What manner of man is this, who proposes to the world a system of religion, which the wisdom of the wise could never discover; which is evidently founded on the necessities, and adapted to the condition and circumstances of all mankind? And who is this, that proclaims the pardon of sins to the whole sinful race of men, &c.”

N O T E VII. Page 11.

For example. Though I may find it difficult (on the common hypothesis of the plenary inspiration of the Evan-

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gelists

* Totties Sermons, 12th

gelists, I will venture to say it is impossible) to account satisfactorily for the difference between St. Luke, on the one hand, and St. Matthew and St. Mark on the other, in their relation of the behaviour of the two malefactors on the cross; m I for that reason to reject the account of the crucifixion and resurrection of Jesus Christ, in which they all agree?

N O T E VIII. Page 11.

On the supposition of the falsehood of Christianity, may it not be fairly asked, by what strange fatality it has happened, that there should be such a variety of proofs of its truth—proofs which have stood the test of ages and bade defiance to the learning of a Porphyry—the malice of a Julian, the wit of Voltaire, and even the sneers of a G——n. Surely, such another falsehood, if it be one, is not to be found in the history of man.

N O T E IX. Page 12.

For this reason (not to mention others) I confess myself to be of the same opinion with Grotius, Erasmus, and many eminent Divines, respecting the plenary inspiration of the holy scriptures. There may be some mistakes---even interpolations. The great fundamental article of Christianity and its moral precepts, are plain and evident. In short, the evidence for the truth of the Christian religion, notwithstanding these mistakes, &c. is still sufficient.

It seems to be the general plan of providence in the economy of this world of our's, in all other respects. No more is done for effecting any purpose than is sufficient for it. This end secured, other matters are left to their usual course. To relate matters of fact, inspiration (in
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the sense in which it is commonly taken) would surely be unnecessary. It is a maxim in philosophy, that there is no waste in nature. There can be no doubt, but that the evidence for the truth of Christianity might have been much greater than it is---nay, to such a degree as to be irresistible by the most perverse. Providence might even cause a voice to proclaim from the heavens, every day at noon, over every parish church in christendom, in words distinct and loud, that even the deaf might hear,——
“ Christianity is true ! Christianity is true ! ” But this would be not only not analogous to what we observe of God’s moral government in all other respects, but unsuitable for many obvious reasons, to such a state as man at present is placed in. Every thing required as a duty of a rational and a probationary being, must be from the exercise of his reason and the free use of his will. No action of his without it can deserve praise or reward. Nay, the very exercise of his reason is a duty itself. And surely, in the article of religion not one of the least.

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A P P E N D I X.

MR. HUME is well known to have been not only a disbeliever of the Christian religion, but to have taken pains, by his writings, to destroy the belief of it in others. To accomplish this worthy design, the argument which pleased him most, and which indeed he prided himself on having discovered, was to do most wonderful execution—no less than to destroy for ever the belief of miracles, which, at one stroke, he hoped would destroy the belief of Christianity itself. And indeed it is very certain the credibility of the latter depends, I was going to say, entirely on the credibility of the former. This formidable argument he derives, by a bewildered kind of reasoning, (in which it must be allowed he was very expert) from *experience*. Now I am vain enough to flatter myself, that a few observations will be sufficient to make it evidently appear, that his reasoning is, as applied

plied by him to the credibility of the scripture miracles, weak and even absurd.

In the first place I observe, and shall set it down as a truth which I defy any sceptic to controvert, that the belief of every past fact,* of whatever nature it may be, whether ordinary or extraordinary, depends entirely on the consideration of the circumstances attending the performance of it: Such as, whether the agent was equal to the performance—and whether it was worthy of and suitable to his character; also, the time when, the place where, and the reason why he performed it. In the second place it is to be considered, who were the witnesses of his having performed it; their number, their character, and whether they were competent judges of the fact; and whether they had any selfish views, any temporal interest to serve, by testifying the truth of it. And lastly, it may be considered, whether such consequences have followed from it as might reasonably have been expected.

• It would be altogether childish to suppose the question related to an impossible fact: as; that it should be said a man had walked on the bare water as on firm ground; or had flown in the air; or had restored a blind man to sight, without the help of art, or any supernatural assistance,

ed. Now when all these particulars concur in proof of any fact, such as, for example, the miracles recorded in the Gospels, what, in the name of common sense, has Mr. Hume's great champion *experience* to do in the case? Was it necessary that there should have been experience of miracles of some kind or other (no matter what) in the second century, for the sole purpose of rendering credible those recorded to have been performed in the first? But those very miracles of the second century would equally stand in need of miracles in the third, in support of their own credibility: and so on to the end of the world. Mr. Hume should have told us the time and place, in what ages, in what countries, in whose presence, and how often those miracles should be repeated. But is it possible he could seriously maintain, that a miracle should be exhibited now and then, merely to satisfy him, and all sceptics of his growth, that those recorded in the Scriptures are credible. Yes, says Mr. Hume, for "*no testimony is sufficient to establish a miracle unless the falsehood of it is more miraculous than the fact it endeavours to establish.*"

I will venture to say, that if this be not nonsense, it is very near it; as will appear by
a fair

a fair change of a word. No testimony is sufficient to establish a miracle, unless the falsehood of it (the testimony) is more miraculous than the miracle it endeavours to establish. What do you think reader of the phrase more miraculous than a miracle? For the word *fact* is only a substitute for the word *miracle*. But, says a Humite, the word miraculous must not be taken in its strict literal sense; it only means wonderful. Not very accurate, however, for a great metaphysician. I rather think it should mean improbable or incredible. But whatever was his meaning, the proposition is so worded as to create a confusion of ideas. For it seems to oppose the credibility or incredibility of the testimony for the truth of a fact, to the credibility or incredibility of the fact itself. But this is a mere fallacy. Nay it is little less than downright nonsense to compare the credit due to a testimony for the truth of a fact, with the credit due to the fact itself. Whether such a testimony is to be believed or not is a fair question; but whether such a fact, abstractedly considered (i. e. without any regard to the testimony in proof of it) is to be believed or not, is a nonsensical question. For the belief of the fact rests intirely on the belief
of

of the testimony: if there appears to me reason to believe the testimony, it is out of my power to disbelieve the fact.* In short, this thesis of Mr. Hume is a jumble of words that seem indeed to have some meaning; and that is all. He is so very refined a reasoner that he often puzzles his reader and out-wits himself. But not to take any advantage of him from any inaccuracy in the expression, I will give him all the fair play I can by drawing out at large what I take to have (or at least what I think should have) been his meaning in this famous thesis—supposing it applied to the credibility of the miracles recorded in the Gospels—viz. Whether it is more improbable, that the Apostles and Evangelists should have been deceived themselves in thinking they saw miracles performed; or that they should have combined together to deceive others, by endeavouring to make them believe things which they themselves knew had never happened; or that the history which gives an account of these matters was forged—than that the Creator and Moral Governor of the Universe—the universal and (to speak strictly and philosophically

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* It would be absurd, as remarked before, to suppose the question related to an impossible fact.

phically) the only agent in nature, should have wrought what we call miracles; for the purpose of establishing a religion, which mankind stood greatly in need of; and without which miracles, there is reason to think could never have been established at all;* unless by his over-ruling their wills:—a proceeding inconsistent with moral agency. On which side the greater improbability lies, let the candid reader determine.

The truth is, the belief or disbelief of every fact recorded in history depends entirely on the probability or improbability of the truth of the testimony given in proof of it. If there appears

• The Apostles and Evangelists were deceived themselves in thinking they saw miracles performed. Let the Deist make this appear probable if he can.

The Apostles and Evangelists combined together to deceive others. Let the Deist make this appear probable if he can.

The history was forged. Let the Deist make this appear probable if he can.

Now if he can prove either one of these three articles, I will allow him to be fairly justified in disbelieving the miracles recorded in the Gospels. But if he cannot do this, and is possessed of the smallest share of candour, he must confess, that so far from its being a mark of credulity or enthusiasm to believe that miracles were wrought at the time of the first promulgation of Christianity, it would be a proof of great prejudice or dissimulation to disbelieve or deny it.

pears to me reason to believe the testimony, it is out of my power, as I said before, to disbelieve the fact. Indeed, to believe the testimony and disbelieve the fact is a ridiculous absurdity.

But let us consider this thesis in another light. "No testimony is sufficient to establish a miracle unless the falsehood of it is more miraculous than the fact (miracle) it endeavours to establish."

Now it is plain, that nothing can be more miraculous than a miracle; and Mr. Hume asserts that something (viz. the falsehood of the testimony) should be more miraculous than a miracle, in order to render a miracle credible. So that by this shrewd reasoning (as I suppose he thought it) it is impossible that any testimony can be sufficient to establish the belief of a miracle. Such kind of reasoning is of itself strange enough. But when one considers the plain tendency of it, (no less than to undermine the belief of all revealed religion) it is impossible not to hold the memory of such a writer in detestation. But Mr. Hume tells us he wrote for fame. So this selfish motive was sufficient with him to outweigh all consideration of the injury such doctrine might occasion. And yet

I may be told, perhaps, that Mr. Hume was a benevolent man.

I flatter myself that I have said enough to make it evidently appear, that his reasoning concerning testimony is fallacious; and that his boasted argument from experience, respecting the credibility of miracles, is not only weak but absurd.

Now that Mr. Hume was a man of ability cannot be denied. But surely he must have been infatuated, I was going to say intoxicated with vanity and self-conceit, not to have perceived himself the weakness of such reasoning. His pride was to be singular, like his friend Rousseau. And indeed for singularity (the child of vanity) the world cannot, perhaps, produce their equals.

The Devil I hope will excuse me if I here take the liberty to reason with him a little on the subject of miracles. But, in the first place, I would ask him, if ever he had the courage, or at least the curiosity, to examine into the true cause of his being so very strenuous, on all occasions, in denying that a miracle has ever been wrought, *in any one instance since the creation*. He is so very earnest and peremptory on this point, whenever it comes on the carpet, that it appears to me

as if he thought his interest was some how concerned in it. But I should be glad if he would inform me from whom or from whence he has this intelligence. Does Celsus, or Porphyry? (who ascribed the miracles recorded in the Gospels to magic)—Does history (is not the Bible history?) inform him that no miracles have been wrought since the creation? I suppose, however, that he would make no difficulty in allowing it, could he persuade himself that the Creator of the universe had ever interposed for that purpose. In case of such interposition, all his difficulty of conceiving the manner how * the miracle was performed must certainly vanish. The great question then is, not in what manner it is possible that several thousand persons could have been fed with a few loaves of bread and a few small fishes; or how a dead man could have been brought to life again; but whether it is credible, from the evidence history furnishes us with, that God did ever interpose for such purposes? Now I should be glad to see what proofs the Deist has to produce, or what arguments he can bring, against the
strong

* If the difficulty of conceiving how a thing can be done be a sufficient reason for disbelieving it, we should be reduced to a strange state of scepticism indeed.

strong evidence there is from the history of Christianity, (not to mention that of the whole of the Jewish dispensation) of God's having actually so interposed. But let him remember, that if he undertakes this ticklish task and his proofs should be found insufficient, or his arguments too weak, to invalidate this evidence, his cause is plainly lost. For, if he is not devoid of all candour, he must in that case acknowledge Christianity to be true; notwithstanding the difficulties he sees, or fancies he sees, in other respects. I might say the same respecting the evasion of a noted Deist * on the accomplishment of some of the prophecies of Daniel. When the correspondence between the predictions and the events were too striking to be denied, he had recourse to this wretched and indeed dangerous shift, viz. "That the predictions were " written after the events." A likely story truly, that a man should pretend to foretell events which were known to have already happened. But waving this, and other considerations, in proof of the authenticity of the prophecies of Daniel, what I mean to observe at present is, that the Deist by having recourse to this plea, has not the least subterfuge

* Porphyry.

terfuge left him, if he cannot make it good. The very learned Porphyry, before mentioned, tried hard at it; and what hand did he make of it? Our elaborate historian may perhaps do better. Let him try. But, by the way, were the prophecies concerning Babylon, Egypt, Tyre, the dispersion of the Jews into "all the winds," St. Paul's man of sin sitting in the temple of God; and particularly, the prophecies of our Saviour of his own death and resurrection, and of the destruction of Jerusalem, written after the events? To these I might add the predictions in the book of Revelation; particularly, that of the prodigious corruption of Christianity. Now considering the purity and perfection of the doctrines of this religion, this event must have appeared at the time of its being predicted, the most unlikely to happen of any that the imagination could have suggested. It is surely very improbable that a man uninspired could have supposed that God would ever suffer his holy religion to be thus corrupted, and virtue and righteousness to be thus oppressed. The same book, however, declares, that a time will come when this same religion shall be cleared from all its corruptions and prevail over the whole world.

And

And here it may not be improper to repeat again, that neither Celsus; Julian, nor Porphyry denied the miracles recorded in the Gospels; though they ascribed them indeed to magic.

Unpleasing as this piece of history may be to the Deist, or however unwilling he may be to press it close, I think if he has any regard to the propriety of his *creed*, he will do well not to turn from it, with a disdainful indifference, as a matter beneath his consideration. I leave it to his ingenuity to reconcile his rejecting the whole account of miracles with so easy an air, with the belief of them by such learned and noted enemies of Christianity. There appears to me no other way of his getting rid of this difficulty but by denying the fact. This however is rather dangerous. For where will he fly to next if he should be driven from this hold—if it should be made appear on the issue of the trial, that there is reason to believe the fact? Alas! what a situation is this of a Deist? on how many sides is he hard pressed! and at best, what a comfortless state it is. If Christianity is an imposture, what will be his gain? If it is a serious truth, what may not be his loss? But to return to the consideration of miracles.

miracles. Now, setting facts aside—I should be glad to know, why it is so incredible a thing, that God might not, on some very important occasions, have interposed in a particular, or, what is called, miraculous manner, since the creation. He certainly interposed in a very particular manner at that time. And is the creation of man, and the production of every thing necessary for his subsistence, more credible, less miraculous, or easier accounted for than bringing a dead man to life again? or feeding five thousand men with a few small fishes and a few loaves of bread? Even the motion of the moon is at this time just as miraculous as when it received its first impulse. Whenever I look at this conspicuous mark of the power and goodness of the Deity, I can easily imagine it to be the first instant it began to exist. The lapse of time since that event alters not the case. In this respect, six thousand years, or six minutes, is just the same thing.

As to the objection against the credibility of miracles, from a consideration of the unchangeableness of the Deity; or that the original plan of the course of nature must have been defective, if a deviation from it was necessary, at times, to keep it in order, are both

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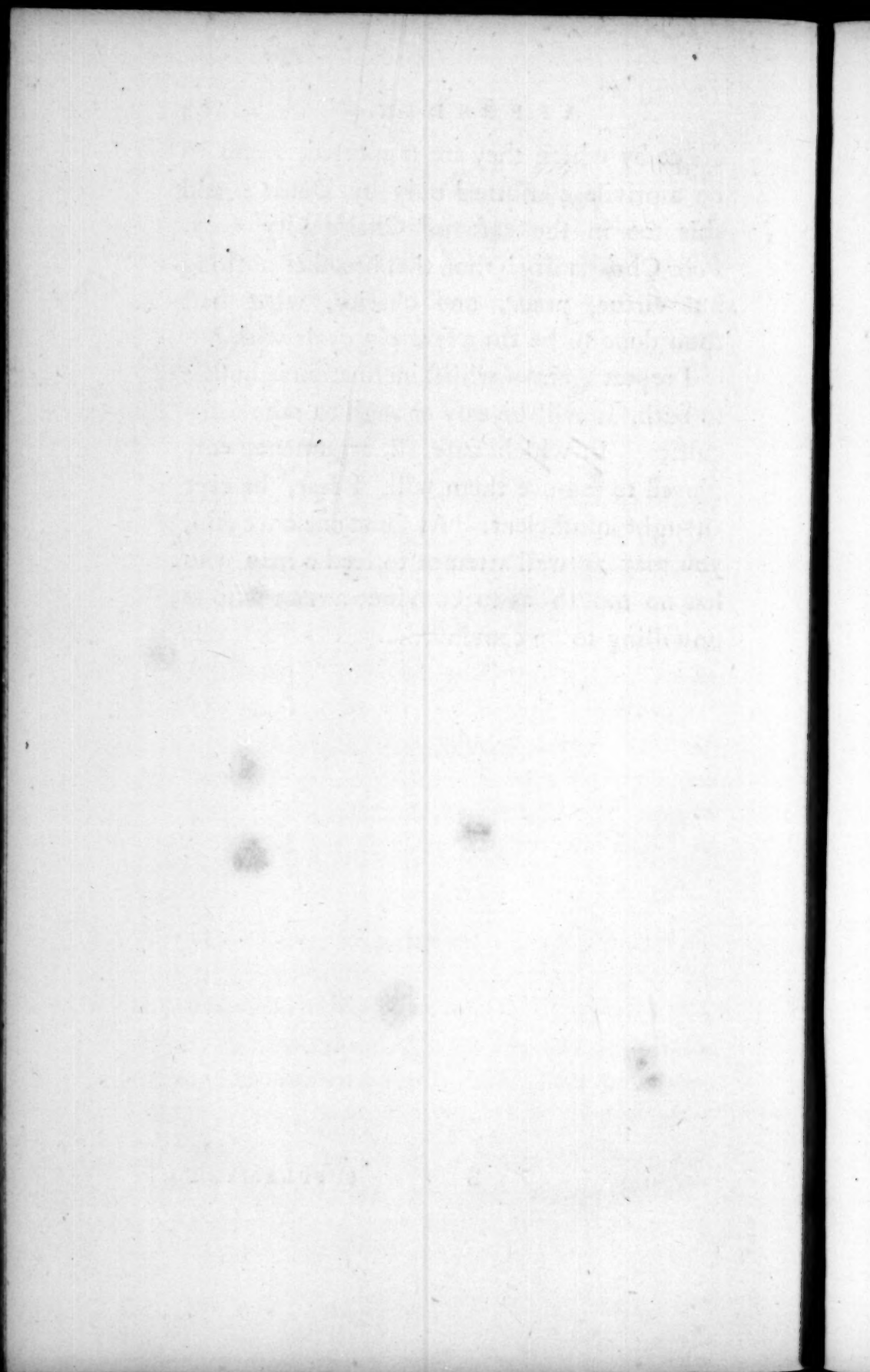
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of little weight, when it is considered, that this is a subject not only quite beyond our reach, but that for any thing the Deist can make appear to the contrary, this very deviation might have been as much a part of the Deity's original plan as any the most common occurrence in nature. I wonder what idea the Deist affixes to the phrase *course of nature*? Does he suppose the source and support of all existence stands apart from the universe as a watch-maker from his watch after he has finished it? If he does, I do not much admire his philosophy.

The truth is, whilst inclination is hostile to faith, it will be easy enough to raise difficulties and start objections. Why is not Christianity universal? Why did not Christ appear sooner in the world? What occasion for a Mediator? Cannot the all-merciful Creator pardon sin without one? &c. But notwithstanding these and a hundred more of such whys and wherefores, the evidence for the truth of Christianity remains unhurt. To endeavour to discredit facts which are said to have been performed by an agent equal to the performance, worthy his character, and for purposes beneficial to mankind, by any other means than by disproving or invalidating the evidence

dence by which they are supported, seems to be a privilege assumed only by Deists; and this too in the case of Christianity only. Poor Christianity! thou that breathes nothing but virtue, peace, and charity, what hast thou done to be thus severely dealt with?

I repeat again — whilst inclination is hostile to faith, it will be easy enough to raise difficulties. In which case all arguments employed to remove them will, I fear, be ever thought insufficient. As some one once said, you may as well attempt to feed a man who has no mouth as to convince a man who is unwilling to be convinced.



S U P P L E M E N T

T O T H E

PRECEDING APPENDIX.

I N the Critical Review for January last (1792), the Reviewer of a publication, entitled, "The Extent of Human Reason considered," has observed, that Mr. Hume's objections against miracles still want a clearer and fuller answer. Whether the Reviewer has ever read the excellent essay of Dr. Adams, in reply to those objections; or, the remarks upon them by Dr. Leland, in his valuable work, "A View of Deistical Writers;" or those in the preceding Appendix, is what I will not pretend to say. I am willing to suppose, he has not. And I honestly confess, that I am vain enough to flatter myself, that what has been said, even in this last, though so very short, is yet, if well and impartially considered, sufficient to remove them. Sensible, however, that no writer can be a proper judge of his own work, I am very ready to allow, that I may have paid myself too great a compliment. But still flattered with the hope, of being able to satisfy the Reviewer, and others who may possibly entertain the same opinion, I shall now enlarge on what was there said.

I could have wished the Reviewer had pointed out that part of Mr. Hume's argument, which

appears to him as not having been sufficiently replied to: it might have saved me some trouble. As he has not done it, I must try to find it out myself. But I shall first venture to observe, that Mr. Hume in all his reasonings about miracles, has not made a single objection, that can, in my opinion, be fairly said to be of any real weight: and that its having the appearance of it, which I should suppose it may have with some readers, is owing to bold assertions, clothed in a great parade of words, and accompanied, not unfrequently, by a very strange phraseology; which is rendered still more obscure by a confused and fallacious manner of reasoning.

For example, with respect to fallacy, at his very outset (*Essays*, Edit. 1779, 12mo. Vol. 3d. Page 153,) he quotes the following passage from Dr. Tillotson: "It is acknowledged on all hands, that the authority of scripture or tradition is founded merely on the apostles who were eye witnesses to the miracles of our Saviour by which he proved his divine mission." Upon this Mr. Hume makes the following remark: "Our evidence then for the truth of the Christian religion is less than the evidence for the truth of our senses." But what then? Would he insinuate, that because the evidence for the truth of the Christian religion is less than the evidence for the truth of our senses, *therefore* it ought not to be believed!

Another

Another instance of fallacy occurs in his famous thesis, that "no testimony is sufficient to establish a miracle, unless the falshood of it is more miraculous than the fact it endeavours to establish." It is evident by the words of this proposition, that a comparison is made between the falshood of the testimony in proof of a fact, with the fact itself; which is not only a fallacy but nonsense. However, we know what he means. But it no more affects the belief of a miracle, than the most common occurrence in life. A miracle, if God be the agent, is just as credible as any fact within the sphere of the power of man, when man is the agent. Respecting the belief of a miracle, the only question is, whether from the evidence we have, it is reasonable to believe that God *was* the agent. But more of this farther on.

In page 154 we come to his boasted argument from *experience*. Mind his big words, reader. "I flatter myself that I have discovered an argument of a like nature, which, if just, will with the wise and learned, be an everlasting check to all kinds of superstition and delusion, and consequently be useful as long as the world endures." He means (by what he immediately adds) useful to destroy the belief of miracles. The world will no doubt, as long as it endures, be much obliged to him for this favor. For thus he goes on. "For so long I presume will the accounts of miracles and prodigies be found in all history sacred and profane." "Though experience (says he)

" be

“ be our only guide in reasoning concerning mat-
 “ ters of fact, it must be acknowledged that this
 “ guide is not altogether infallible, but in some
 “ cases is apt to lead us into errors and mistakes,
 “ &c.” But all he says in this and the next pa-
 ragraph relates entirely to the probability or im-
 probability of future events; and is therefore little
 or nothing to the purpose. (Page 155.)

On the three following I shall only observe, that
 nothing is said in them but what any believer in
 miracles will readily grant him; and the whole is
 therefore nothing but an idle parade of words.
 But as the next and two subsequent ones con-
 tain the substance of his grand objection against
 miracles, I will transcribe them entire; making
 such remarks upon them as will, I trust, plainly
 prove, that they do not in the least degree invali-
 date the evidence for the truth of the miracles re-
 corded in the scriptures.

“ Suppose, for instance, that the fact which
 “ the testimony endeavours to establish, partakes
 “ of the extraordinary and marvellous; in that
 “ case the evidence resulting from the testimony
 “ admits of a diminution, greater or less, in pro-
 “ portion as the fact is more or less unusual.
 “ The reason why we place any credit in witnesses
 “ and historians is not derived from any connection
 “ which we perceive a priori between testimony
 “ and reality” (what an acute observation!) “ but
 “ because we are accustomed to find a conformity
 “ between them. But when the fact attested is
 “ such

“ such a one as has seldom fallen under our ob-
 “ servation, here is a contest of two opposite ex-
 “ periences, of which one destroys the other, as
 “ far as its force goes; and the superior can only
 “ operate on the mind by the force which remains.
 “ The very same principle of experience which
 “ gives us a certain degree of assurance in the tes-
 “ timony of witnesses, gives us also in this case
 “ another degree of assurance against the fact which
 “ they endeavor to establish; from which contra-
 “ diction arises a counterpoise and mutual de-
 “ struction of belief and authority.” Page 159.

He says, there is a contest of two opposite ex-
 periences. I ask, what are they? Why, says he,
 the *one* is a conformity we are accustomed to find
 “ between testimony and reality;” and the *other* is,
 “ when the fact attested is such an one as has
 “ seldom fallen under our observation.” The
 first, no doubt, may be called an experience: but
 I think it would puzzle Bays himself to make out
 how the last can be so called. From the phrases
 he uses and his manner of reasoning, it is not al-
 ways easy to find out his exact meaning, and to set
 it down in plain English. The best sense I can
 put upon the whole of this last paragraph is this—
 That the more unusual and extraordinary any fact
 is, the more unlikely to be true; and consequently,
 the stronger the evidence ought to be to induce
 the belief of it. But this no one denies.—
 Again, in the next paragraph. “ But in order
 “ to increase the probability against the testimony
 “ of

“ of witnesses, let us suppose that the fact which
 “ they affirm, instead of being marvellous, is
 “ really miraculous; and suppose also, that the
 “ testimony considered apart and by itself, amounts
 “ to an entire proof; in that case, there is proof
 “ against proof, of which the strongest must pre-
 “ vail, but still with a diminution of its force in
 “ proportion to that of its antagonist.” Page 159.
 He says, “ *and suppose also that the testimony con-*
 “ *sidered apart and by itself amounts to an entire*
 “ *proof.*” Now to say that there is an entire proof
 on the side of the testimony is, in my humble opi-
 nion (notwithstanding his “ *apart and by itself*”)
 tantamount to saying, the fact is true. But, says
 Mr. Hume, this proof is opposed by another proof
 derived from the nature of the fact, which is equi-
 valent to it, from which arises “ *a counterpoise and*
 “ *mutual destruction of belief and authority.*” I
 suppose like two equal quantities in Algebra, the
 one affirmative, the other negative; and so de-
 stroying each other—which may be thus expressed,

The belief of the fact from testimony—the disbelief of the fact from the nature of the fact = 0

or,

The disbelief of the fact from the nature of the fact—the belief of the fact from testimony = 0

Shall I now charge Mr. H. unjustly, if I suppose
 him to assert, that though the fact is proved to be
 true, it is, at the same time, also proved to be
 false. It is very certain, this is somewhat more
 than common nonsense: but it is à la Hume—
 nonsense refined.*

His

* See Mr. Hume's section on sceptical doubts.

His other great argument is contained in the following paragraph: "A miracle is a violation of the laws of nature, and as a firm and unalterable experience has established those laws, the proof against a miracle from the nature of the fact, is as entire as any argument from experience can possibly be imagined. Why is it more than probable that all men must die; that lead cannot of itself remain suspended in the air; that fire consumes wood and is extinguished by water; unless it be that these events are found agreeable to the laws of nature, and that there is required a violation of those laws; or in other words, a miracle to prevent them. Nothing is esteemed a miracle if it ever happens in the common course of nature, (another acute observation!) It is no miracle that a man, seemingly in good health, should die on a sudden, because such a kind of death, though more unusual, has been frequently observed to happen. But it is a miracle that a dead man should come to life, because that has never been observed to happen in any age or country." (Here he plainly begs the question.) "There must therefore be an uniform experience against every miraculous event." (Here he draws a conclusion from premises which he gratuitously assumes; for he has not even attempted to prove, and he could not but know that his adversaries denied them.) He goes on, "otherwise the event would not merit the appellation ;

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“ tion; and as an uniform experience amounts
 “ to a proof, there is here a direct and full proof
 “ from the nature of the fact, against the existence
 “ of any miracle; nor can such a proof be de-
 “ stroyed, or the miracle rendered credible but
 “ by an opposite proof, which is superior.” P. 160.

I have before observed, that it is not always easy to find out his exact meaning. By the last sentence in this verbose paragraph, I am at a loss to know whether he means to say, that there are two proofs against the existence of miracles, or only one. He mentions an uniform experience, and the nature of the fact. Now if he meant each as a distinct proof, it was surely incumbent upon him to have proved not only, that there has been an uniform experience against every miraculous event, but also that the nature of a miracle is another proof against it. With respect to the first, I cannot help saying, that he must have had an uncommon degree of assurance to assert so roundly, that there has been an uniform and an unalterable experience against every miraculous event, when the histories of the old and new testaments produce such strong evidence of the contrary*. Such a
 disputant

* Had Mr. Hume been cotemporary with Moses and Aaron, and accompanied them through the Red Sea, and all their peregrinations—had afterwards fought by the side of Joshua—had been the companion of Elijah and Elisha—had been conversant with the Apostles, and seen the crucifixion of Jesus Christ—had travelled with St. Paul—had been present at the attempt of Julian to rebuild the temple at Jerusalem—and had
 lived

disputant is hardly fit to be argued with. And indeed, had not his other writings proved him to have been possessed of considerable abilities, there is scarce any thing he has said in his section on miracles, that would have been thought to deserve the least notice. On his other proof I must observe, that for the nature of a thing to be of itself a proof of its non-existence—I say, there is something so strangely absurd in the idea, that the bare mention of it is sufficient to expose it. However, he attempts to give a reason, why the nature of a *miracle* is a proof against the existence of a miracle; it is, because a miracle is a violation of the laws of nature; and it is therefore impossible, or at least incredible, that there should ever have been a miracle.

Now common sense informs me, that whatever the order of things may be, or if he would rather have it so called, the laws of nature, it was certainly God who was the author of them, and who upholds them. And can it be said with any propriety, that if he thinks fit to change or suspend them, he *violates* them? In short, for a man to affirm, that the nature of a miracle is a proof

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against

lived on till he had at length settled himself in Scotland, and published his section on miracles; we might then, I say, have possibly given him some little credit for his bold assertion of there having been *an uniform and an unalterable experience against every miraculous event*. I hope the reader will excuse my having indulged myself with this serio-jocular stricture on Mr. Hume.

against the existence of miracles, without denying at the same time, that there is any Being endowed with power sufficient, and without proving (on the supposition of such a Being) that he never did exert it, for the performance of any; and, what is still worse, without disproving the evidence produced by his adversaries of his having exerted it—I say, take it altogether, I think I shall not overcharge the matter by saying, that none but the weakest reasoner, or a desperate deistical bigot, could have had the folly, or the effrontery, to have obtruded such an unsupported argument in the world.

I must beg the reader's patience for one farther mention of his first proof, which I shall put in the form of a Theorem, and conclude with a short remark upon it; but which, I trust, will be sufficient to shew its utter inconclusiveness, respecting the disbelief of the miracles recorded in the scriptures. “As there has been an uniform and an unalterable experience against every miraculous event, therefore it is incredible that any miraculous event ever took place.” But against this there is unfortunately (for his argument) a trifling objection, viz. *That it is not true*, there has been a uniform and an unalterable experience against every miraculous event. So far from it, there is all the evidence that can reasonably be desired, of there having been *many* miraculous events. I will mention one only—the resurrection of Jesus Christ; which as miraculous
as

as it was, such is the evidence for its having really happened *, that it was sufficient to have gained the firm belief of (not to mention the early converts to christianity) Grotius, Sir Matthew Hale, Mr. Locke, Sir Isaac Newton, Lord Chancellor King, and the late very learned Michaelis; men, whom the whole world will, I believe, easily allow to have been at least as unprejudiced, and as capable of judging, and to have as strictly examined into the merits of the question as Hobbes, Collins, Tindal, Lord Bolingbroke, Hume, or Voltaire.

Here I shall take my leave of Mr. Hume: and conclude with a reflection of a writer, whose name I do not, at this moment, recollect.

“ Religion, like the firmament, may sometimes
 “ appear to us obscure, but at the same time is
 “ not the less radiant. The passions and senses are
 “ vapours which often intercept the rays of truth.
 “ But he who reflects without being alarmed, waits
 “ the return of a serene and cheerful sky. We
 “ have seen the fogs raised by Celsus, Porphyry,
 “ Spinoza, Collins, &c. dispersed. And we may
 “ be assured that those raised by the philosophy of
 “ the present time will share the same fate. In
 “ every age some singular men have appeared who
 “ seemed to threaten the annihilation of Christi-
 “ anity. But they have passed away like those
 “ tempests, which only serve to shew the heavens
 “ more bright.

* See West on the Resurrection.

As when from mountain tops the dusky clouds
Ascending, while the north wind sleeps, o'erspread
Heav'n's cheerful face; the low'ring element
Scowls o'er the darken'd landscape, snow, or show'r.
If chance the radiant sun, with farewell sweet,
Extend his ev'ning beam, the fields revive,
The birds their notes renew, and bleating herds
Attest their joy, that hill and valley rings.

MILTON.

T H E E N D.

I beg leave to recommend to the reader a late publication, entitled "The Evidences of the Jewish and Christian "Revelations," By the Rev. Henry Murray, which, whoever carefully peruses, and continues an unbeliever, must, in my opinion, be either blinded by prejudice, or hardened by pride against all conviction.

Addi-

Additional Note for Page 76.

Respecting this important prophesy of the beast with seven heads and ten horns, I will comprise what may be said of it in the following propositions. To either of which if the Deist chuses to make an objection, I will venture to rest the merits of the question on the answer to that very objection.

First, The Author of the Book of Revelation undertook to predict future events.

Secondly, Christianity and events relating to it are the great objects of it.

Thirdly, The great corruption of the purity of the Christian faith by the church of Rome, and the persecution of Christians by the Popes for refusing to submit to their impious and absurd doctrines, and superstitions; together with their arrogant and blasphemous claims and pretensions, are events so strange, and of such importance to the church of Christ, as would afford the strongest presumption (had the Author been inspired) that, in *such a book*, they would not be unnoticed.

Fourthly, The characteristic marks of the beast with seven heads and ten horns, described in the 13th, 17th, 18th and 19th chapters, answer so well, and are so easily applicable to the History of *Popery*, as to hold out a striking and convincing evidence, that those events have *not* been unnoticed.

Fifthly and Lastly, I conclude, therefore, from the *consistency* of the four preceding propositions, that, from this single prophesy, the *inspiration* of the Author of the Book of Revelation is proved; and, consequently, the *truth* of the Christian Religion.

ERRATA.

Page	Line	
2	— 21	For <i>purposes</i> , read <i>purpose</i> .
10	— 9	Before the word <i>argument</i> , insert the word <i>vare</i> .
11	— 20	Dele <i>is</i> .
12	— 8	For <i>it's</i> , read <i>his</i> .
13	— 13	In the note dele the comma after <i>saw</i> , and place it after <i>transacted</i> ; and a semicolon after <i>knew</i> .
20	— 24	For <i>to</i> read <i>against</i> .
31	— 20	For <i>Abubiker</i> , read <i>Abubeker</i> .
38	— 20	For <i>makes</i> , read <i>marks</i> .
43	— 18	For <i>Arminia</i> , read <i>Armenia</i> .
50	—	In the note, for <i>ch. 4th</i> , read <i>ch. 11th</i> .
56	— 23	For 1784, read 1791.
74	— 24	For <i>destruction</i> , read <i>description</i> .
84	— 21	For <i>could</i> , read <i>would</i> .
104		In the note, for <i>écrit</i> , read <i>écritures</i> .
ib.		ditto, dele <i>ures</i> .
52	— 27	For <i>in the prophecy</i> , read <i>in either of the prophecies</i> .

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